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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SIMILARITIES AND DIVERGENCIES

IN THE WORKS OF N. V. GOGOL AND H. F. KVITKA

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Similarities and Divergencies in the Works of N. V. Gogol and H. F. Kvitka" submitted by Stephen Paul Symchych in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

SIMILARITIES AND DIVERGENCIES

IN THE WORKS OF N. V. GOGOL AND H. F. KVITKA

(An abstract)

Approximately a decade of literary works (the early 1830's to the early 1840's) placed Kvitka (1778-1843) and Gogol (1809-1852) at the head of important periods in Ukrainian and Russian prose. Russian poetry had reached its height when Gogol published his first works; readers welcomed him as a down-to-earth and timely prose writer. Ukrainian readers accepted Kvitka's prose with the enthusiasm that Kotlyarevsky's poetry had received some three decades earlier; he was the first Ukrainian prose writer to use the vernacular and to select a peasant hero. Hence both authors are important milestones in their respective literatures.

Tsar Alexander (1801-1825) promised to relax the feudal laws as a result of the nation's all-out effort during the Napoleonic wars, but Nicholas I (1825-1855) interpreted the cooperation and the understanding during the war as a sign of the people's confidence in the autocratic regime. He introduced a triple formula: samoderzhavie, pravoslavie i narodnost' (autocracy, Orthodoxy and nationality) to strengthen the old governmental system. The regime failed to recognize that the Napoleonic wars had precipitated liberal thinking, and the two ideologies - autocracy and liberalism - clashed at the slightest provocation.

The leading liberal thinkers altered their plan of action after the unsuccessful Decembrist rising in 1825. They helped to foster an interest in folklore in order to divert the attention of the rising liberalism; they

appealed to the people's sense of pride in their glorious past. A rising interest in folklore inspired prominent men, including Gogol, to search for folk materials.

Both authors based their works on Ukrainian folklore. Kvitka selected his heroes from the populace, and placed them against a background of Ukrainian folklore - customs, sayings, beliefs, and the whole field of demonology. Like Kvitka, Gogol was hailed for exalting the common man; he presented his pageant of common people amidst a wealth of Ukrainian folk materials. Both authors used folklore as the foundation of their works; their prose was not identified with either the liberals or the supporters of autocracy.

Factors which influenced the lives of both writers had a direct bearing on their literary productions. Kvitka had an experience of God in early childhood, and personally knew Skovoroda, the Ukrainian philosopher, while Gogol inherited his mother's sentimentality and his father's qualities of a playwright. He showed an interest in dramatics as well as in literature. As a result, Kvitka was a searcher of human souls, a preacher of righteousness, an excellent moralizer and a didactic writer, while Gogol presented life candidly.

The similarities, therefore, arise from a common background and common folk materials. The divergencies begin in their plots, and become more pronounced in their ultimate objectives. The dissimilarity in their character and personality, occupations, personal experiences, in the factors which influenced their lives, and in their conception of the purpose of life were the chief causes of their divergencies. Gogol and Kvitka provide

a classic example of differences that developed from basic similarities owing to the dissimilarity in their characters.

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INTRODUCTION

Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol-Yanovsky and Hryhoriy Fedorovych Kvitka-Osnovyanenko were selected in the first place for this comparative work because of the important positions they occupy in their respective fields of literature. Gogol headed a great period of realism in Russian prose, while Kvitka became the pioneer of Ukrainian prose works, and he introduced the vernacular. A specific period of their literary career, the early 1830's to the early 1840's, has been selected from both authors for this study. In addition, their cultural background, the proximity of their birthplaces, their academic training, and the dependence on oral traditions in their works are similarities which can be compared. The factors which influenced their lives, their personal outlook and experiences of life show a striking dissimilarity. Their basic similarities, as compared to the differences in their literary works, makes the comparison all the more challenging.

The object of this comparison is to select as many major common topics in the works of both authors as possible, and to analyze how each author presented, treated or interpreted the selected subject matter. In the course of this discussion, if a single story in each author is sufficient to illustrate the object of discussion, there will be no necessity to include any supplementary stories. This may prevent confusion due to an excessive agglomeration of material.

Gogol's early works, the so-called Ukrainian stories, form the basis of the comparison. This period of his writings is very rich in subject matter which can aptly be compared with the works of Kvitka. His Petersburg stories contain a vast amount of material that could be used for this purpose, but the general theme of these works obscures the subject matter we are looking for so much that it is virtually obliterated. The Petersburg stories surpass the easy flow of language, the juvenile imagination, the light humor and the entertaining elements that are found in his earlier works. But since Gogol's earlier works abound in folklore, they will receive preference in the selection of examples in this study.

Before considering the works of Hryhoriy Kvitka, let us specify what portion of his works will be incorporated in this study. He, too, like Gogol, has a natural boundary between his early and later works. Although his early stories contain elements which lend themselves to comparison, his later works are more suitable. Furthermore, Kvitka's prominence rose when he severed relations with the antiquated Church Slavic language and introduced the vernacular in prose. At this point Kvitka began a new era in Ukrainian prose, and became its first prose writer. The choice of subject matter in this period lends itself most favorably to this comparative work.

The dramatic works of Gogol and Kvitka are not included in this study for two specific reasons. Firstly, drama is a separate literary field, and would require a different approach. Secondly, we find similar themes and plots, and even an influence of one author's dramatic work on that of

the other. It would be completely insufficient to point out similar characters and plots without delving into their background. One would have to establish whether Gogol's Revizor influenced the creation of Kvitka's Priezzhiy iz stolitsy, or vice versa. This would require additional research as well as a lengthy explanation; we would have to deviate from the main object of this work. As a result, the dramatic works of both authors have been eliminated.

In the course of the comparison of the works of our authors, their stories will not be analyzed to determine whether Gogol and Kvitka adhered to the accepted principles of story-writing of their time. While this would contribute to the value of the comparison, a detailed analysis would, again, necessitate a digression from the main topic. The structure and style will be treated in general terms. Beside lengthening this work, the results of the findings would have no direct bearing on the general purpose of this comparative study.

In the course of this study, we will encounter numerous terms, names and titles, in both Russian and Ukrainian languages. The names of rivers, cities, and personalities are transliterated according to the respective systems of transliteration, Russian or Ukrainian, as the case may be. In transliterating Ukrainian names, Ukrainian spelling and pronunciation will be preserved. For example, the name of the river known to most non-Slavic peoples as Dnepr or Dniepr, is transliterated according to Ukrainian spelling and pronunciation: Dnipro.

Exceptions have been made, however, in the case of one of the authors and one of the cities. Although he was Ukrainian by birth, Nikolai Gogol will remain as he is universally known. It would be unnecessarily confusing to call him Mykola Hohol, as Ukrainian orthography would demand. The same will apply to Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. It is left as it is popularly written whenever the word is used.

CHAPTER I

GOGOL AND KVITKA:

THEIR BACKGROUND, LIFE, AND PLACE IN LITERATURE

The beautiful landscape of the Poltava region, adorned by numerous rivers and rivulets overgrown with luxurious vegetation, with occasional sheets of water sparkling in the sun; the gently rolling terrain with groves and orchards, the squat thatch-roofed and whitewashed houses of villages seemingly linked by individual patches of fertile fields, was the inspiring setting in which Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol-Yanovsky and Hryhoriy Fedorovych Kvitka-Osnovyanenko were born and brought up. The panoramic beauty of the countryside, enlivened by its ever-active inhabitants, undoubtedly left a lasting impression on the souls and minds of these talented youths. One would assume that the descriptions of the countryside and the references to natural beauty in the works of both authors were an unconscious reproduction of the picturesque environs of the Poltava region as they knew it in their boyhood. The boundless beauty of the territory reflects itself in the beauty, ease and poetic flow of thought in the works of both authors, comparable to the gently-flowing rivers of Poltava.

Geographically, the Poltava region is situated on the left bank of the Dniπρο river on which it borders for approximately a hundred miles. Its principal rivers, the Sula, Pslo (Psyol) and Vorskla, empty into the main artery, the Dniπρο. These three main rivers, flowing almost parallel to one another, are composed of numerous tributaries which form a useful and exotic network of flowing water. For example, the following rivers,

large and small, empty into the Sula: the Uday, Lysohor, Perevoz, Rudna, Smozh, Mnoha, Ulava, Romen, Lokhvytsya, Sliporod, Orzhytsya, Kryva, Ruda, Bodakva and Voynykha. Not less than ten smaller rivers make up the Pslo river, while five tributaries empty into the Vorskla.¹ All these gently-flowing rivers form a continuous network of water throughout the Poltava region. It is an undisputed fact that "the Vorskla river is among the most picturesque rivers in the Ukraine. It has exceptionally beautiful banks, cut up by numerous hollows and ravines, hemmed by oak and maple forests."²

Beginning at the level of the main artery, the Dniro, there are three fairly distinct terraces in the general region of Poltava. These terraces rise at intervals from the Dniro in a north-easterly direction, forming gentle inclines.³ This makes the topography picturesque, ornate and romantic, - an ideal setting for the creative and poetic disposition of the writers under consideration.

Historically, the Kiev-Poltava region forms the backbone of Ukrainian culture in its broadest sense. Even to this day, the typical Ukrainian costume, the work of art and craft, as well as the nuances of the literary language, are based predominantly on the Kiev-Poltava region.

1. M. F. Kolomiyets', Poltavs'ka oblast' (Kharkiv: Kharkivs'ky universytet, 1959), pp. 15-16.

2. Ibid., p. 16.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

By and large life comes easily to its inhabitants, and the fertility and productivity of the region has probably been a contributing factor in promoting all forms of creative art to a high degree of perfection.

The Poltava region is in close proximity to Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, where the political structure of the Kievan State had gradually been moulded and eventually extended over the surrounding terrain. The region borders on the ancient waterway which linked the highly-civilized Byzantium with its growing neighbor, the Ukraine, to the north. The practical experiences of Byzantium were of invaluable assistance to the Ukraine culturally, religiously and politically.

The Poltava region lies within reasonably communicable distance of the Dniro rapids and the Zaporozhian Sich, the stronghold of the Ukrainian Kozak ⁴ Armies. The brave and chivalrous Kozaks had ended a memorable chapter of the Ukraine's history in the second half of the eighteenth century. The bastion of Ukrainian freedom, the Zaporozhian Sich, which fought for the freedom of the people and the Orthodox faith, had been destroyed in 1775. At a suitable interval after the abolition of the Sich, Catherine II of Russia "finally liquidated all Ukrainian institutions and rights and bound the peasants to the soil."⁵ The abolition of this pillar

4. In transliterating "Kozak," Ukrainian spelling and pronunciation will be preserved.

5. C. A. Manning, Ukrainian Literature: Studies of the Leading Authors (Jersey City: Ukrainian National Association, 1944), p. 14.

of freedom undermined the morale of the Ukrainian population to such a degree that Gogol himself pensively remarked in his famous Taras Bulba:

So, here it is! Sich! Here is the nest from which those [Kozaks], proud and strong as lions, spread their wings. From this place freedom and Kozaks overflow the whole of the Ukraine.⁶

Gogol mentioned the invincible Kozaks and their unsurpassed fame with a sense of pride. He was perturbed at the thought that these Kozaks, "proud and strong as lions," fell into a decline and suffered a complete defeat resulting in the curtailment of their political freedom. Uncertainty, unrest and instability following upon Mazepa's tumultuous Hetmanate dealt a heavy blow to creative art and development of the literary language which needed a thorough revision at that period.

It is pertinent to elaborate on the importance of the literary language. The old alphabet formed by the brothers Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century from the Greek alphabet met the basic purpose. In the first centuries of Christianity, secular literature was non-existent or rather highly discouraged by the Church authorities. After centuries of a gradual rise of civilization, there was a growing need for a more flexible language, suitable for contemporary use. In the seventeenth century, with the rise of secular literature, writers realized that the Church Slavic language was too rigid and stereotyped to express fine, subtle, secular thoughts. Written

6. N. V. Gogol, Sochineniya (New York: International University Press, n.d.), p. 115.

works became less and less intelligible to the average contemporary reader. The realization that Church Slavic was outgrowing its usefulness resulted in a gradual divergence from the historic form by supplementing the language with the vernacular.

As early as 1619 we see Yakub Havatovych's short play written in vernacular.⁷ Dymytriy Tuptalo (1651 - 1709) incorporated common speech in his compilation of the lives of the Saints.⁸ This method of substitution was a long-drawn-out process which did not fully satisfy the demands of the time.

A brave attempt by Kotlyarevsky (1769 - 1838) succeeded in severing relations with the antiquated language, and in replacing the archaic with the vernacular in Ukrainian poetry. His Eneida, a travesty based on Virgil's poem, written in the vernacular, was published in Petersburg in 1798. His implementation of the common speech won an immediate acclaim.

What other writers had not been able to accomplish with serious tracts or flaming denunciations in the old artificial language, Kotlyarevsky had done with a sure and firm touch, thanks to his appreciation of the language and customs of the people.⁹

7. O. I. Bilets'ky, ed., Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury (Kiev: Akademiya nauk ukrayins'koyi RSR, 1957), p. 81.

8. Mytropolyt Ilarion, Dymytriy Tuptalo (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, 1959), p. 87.

9. Manning, Ukrainian Literature . . . , p. 30.

The vernacular was thus introduced without prolonged arguments or polemics.

The romantic and exotic Poltava, with its important contribution to Ukrainian cultural life, added another significant factor to Ukrainian culture, namely the vernacular in literature, thanks to Kotlyarevsky, and subsequently to Kvitka. Poltava became a symbolic dowry to creative minds such as Nikolai Gogol and Hryhoriy Kvitka. It was here, in the treasure house of Ukrainian history that they learned to appreciate the wealth of traditional culture which originated in the dawn of Ukrainian history.

* * *

Hryhoriy Fedorovych Kvitka-Osnovyanenko was the son of a wealthy landowner; he was born on November 29, 1778, in the village of Osnova, on the outskirts of the city of Kharkiv. The future of young Hryhoriy was not promising; he was frail in infancy, suffered from scrofula and "lost his eyesight when he was in the arms of a nursemaid."¹⁰ His parents consulted all the available medical assistance, but human medication proved fruitless. Then Hryhoriy's mother was advised to go on a pilgrimage to the nearby monastery to seek Divine help. Kvitka's family had the reputation of being deeply religious. During a Divine Liturgy in the monastery at Ozeryany, Hryhoriy's eyesight was miraculously restored

10. Hryhoriy Kvitka, Dramaticheskie sochineniya (Kharkiv: Kharkivs'ke uyezdne zemstvo, 1894), p. v.

at the age of five. This blessed event impressed young Hryhoriy's consciousness of God's presence and omnipotence to those who faithfully worship Him. Hryhoriy Kvitka never openly admitted that he was virtually reborn through faith, but this fact was consistently, although quite unconsciously, emphasized throughout life and works. During this period of blindness, "he became especially sensitive to musical impressions . . . he greedily listened to the simple prayerful singing of the village choir."¹¹ In later years he learned to play some musical instruments, and "he played the piano and other instruments; he liked best of all the flute because of its soft sounds."¹² At the age of twelve Kvitka was determined to dedicate himself to the services of God, but his parents gently dissuaded him from following this course.

Kvitka received his primary schooling at home under private tutors as was the custom at the time. He also attended the monastery school. His formal instruction was in Russian, but Kvitka was essentially bilingual; he could speak Ukrainian and Russian equally well. At the age of fifteen his father enrolled him in the army as was the custom in those days, but Kvitka only reported to his superior officers periodically and underwent no formal military training. At the age of eighteen he held the rank of Captain.¹³

11. Kvitka, Dramaticheskie sochineniya, p. v.

12. Ibid., p. vi.

13. H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1956), Vol. 1, p. 4.

His juvenile ambitions, however, recurred when he was twenty-three. He entered the Kruzhansky monastery and fulfilled all the monastic disciplines and duties for almost four years. During his leisure hours at the monastery he played the piano. Kvitka carried out his duties faithfully. Once, however, he took a load of barrels to the market in Kharkiv.

The weather was bad, the wagon and oxen got bogged down on the market square, the axle broke . . . A group of street lads gathered around; recognizing . . . the son of the neighboring landlord, they laughingly began to cry out: "Kvitka, Kvitka, Kvitka!" . . . He let fate look after the monastery wagon, and walked straight home from the square to Osnova intending never to return to the monastery.¹⁴

Kvitka left the monastery without monastic orders to return to civilian life. This was in 1805 when Kvitka was nearly twenty-seven years old.

It seems that either Kharkiv society acted coolly to Kvitka, or Kvitka deliberately shunned society, but the latter seems more probable. Eventually Kvitka became reconciled to the fact that he was a part of society, and engaged in community work. His first project was to organize a theatre of amateur actors in which Kvitka himself participated. Later he became a director of the theatre in Kharkiv.

At the same time as the theatre project, Kvitka nurtured the idea of establishing an institute for girls. In 1816 his idea became a reality. The primary object of the Institute was to educate the daughters of the nobility and the wealthier gentry. Kvitka himself partly financed the

14. Kvitka, Dramaticheskie sochineniya, pp. viii - ix.

building of the school.

In the same year he became one of the three editors of Ukrainsky Vestnik, a literary publication in Kharkiv, but in spite of this new responsibility he did not sever relations with the Institute for girls. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he did not, for it was here that he became acquainted with his future wife, Anna Wolf, who was the Dean of girls there.

Anna Wolf was a well-educated young lady who appreciated good writing, and was acquainted with French sentimental literature. Kvitka's interest and success in literature prompted her to encourage him. She was severe but sincere critic of Kvitka's works. She endeavoured to direct Kvitka's thoughts towards idealism.

Kvitka's personal acquaintance with Hryhoriy Skovoroda (1722-1794), a poet, philosopher, philanthropist and ethical teacher, left a deep impression on his character and outlook on humanity. Skovoroda "was known as a 'Ukrainian Socrates,' 'a walking academy.'" ¹⁵ From him Kvitka learned to recognize that a man is first and foremost a Divine creature regardless of his social status or his economic means. While other writers chose the court, aristocracy and ruling classes as the main focus of their works, Kvitka, according to Yefremov, was "the first in the world"¹⁶ to recognize that a peasant was above all a human being; that a peasant, like

15. V. Radzykevych, Korotky kurs istoriyi ukrayins'koho pys'menstva (L'viv: Ukrayins'ka knyharnya i antykvarnya, 1922), p. 72.

16. Serhiy Yefremov, Korotka istoriya ukrayins'koho pys'menstva (4th ed., L'viv-Leipzig, 1924), p. 130.

an aristocrat or a member of the upper classes, had feelings of joy and sorrow, and that the feelings of peasants were worthy of consideration in literature.

Hryhoriy Kvitka began his literary career in 1816, five years before his marriage to Anna Wolf. His Pis'ma k izdatelyam appeared in the January issue of Ukrainsky Vestnik. The Pis'ma k izdatelyam were written in Russian, and signed with the pseudonym Falaley Povinukhin.

In the early 1830's the author turned to the Ukrainian vernacular, and adapted another pseudonym, Hryhoriy Osnovyanenko (derived from his native village of Osnova on the outskirts of Kharkiv). His first stories in Ukrainian appeared in Utrennyaya zvezda in Kharkiv, in 1833. This publication, incidentally, appeared two years after Gogol's first volume of Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka (excluding the unfortunate Hans Kuechelgarten).

Various reasons prompted Kvitka to forsake Russian in favor of Ukrainian. The weightiest was, perhaps, the realization that Ukrainians ought to use the spoken language in literature. The public had received Kotlyarevsky's Eneida very well, and this encouraged Kvitka. There was a contrary viewpoint, however, which made a deliberate attempt to discourage the use of Ukrainian in literature, purporting that the language was unfit for serious works.

He was joking one day with a writer who was endeavoring to compose in his native tongue and Kvitka asked him to write something serious and sentimental in it. When the author replied that the language was unfit for such subjects, Kvitka became displeased and to prove his friend wrong, he decided to write himself some stories in Ukrainian and soon he turned out two of his own main works, The Soldier's Portrait and Marusya. Their

success was immediate in Ukrainian circles and it was not long before they were translated into Russian and brought the author that fame which he had never achieved in his Russian writings.¹⁷

Evidently his friend's provocative remark was the final jolt that helped Kvitka to decide to use the vernacular.

The importance is that without introducing the vernacular it was impossible to portray a positive hero of the people and to show, not in comic form but on a serious plane, that which the further development of literature required.¹⁸

The question of the vernacular was a serious matter to Kvitka.

Replying to M. O. Maksymovych's letter, dated October 3, 1839, Kvitka agreed wholeheartedly that

. . . it seems your idea of publishing something in our [Ukrainian] language should materialize next year. A definite plan (at least so they inform me)¹⁵ to permit Otechestvennye zapiski in 1840 to publish 4, 6, 8 supplements in Ukrainian. We are awaiting a decision. . . We ought to put to shame and compel to silence the people with queer conceptions who openly preach that it is wrong to write in the language. . .¹⁹

Dante (1265 - 1321), an Italian poet who defied the convention of the day by writing in the vernacular, anticipated Kvitka in his conviction that he should write in the spoken language.

This is why the first Latin poet, Dante, discarded the generally recognized Latin literary language and began to sing out in common speech in which the whole uneducated Italy thought and spoke; this is why not one real poet wrote other than in his own

17. Manning, Ukrainian Literature . . . , p. 35.

18. H. F. Kvitka, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1957), Vol. I, p. 13.

19. Ibid. , Vol. VI, p. 548.

native tongue, in the Muttersprache which soothed his ear in the very tender years of his youth.²⁰

In another letter to M. O. Maksymovych, dated August 13, 1840,

Kvitka seemed rather disturbed about the attacks on the Ukrainian language.

And why do we bother with orthography when great sages preach that there is no such language, and that we twist Russian words and forms into our own It is ridiculous to write like this, but it is sad when one thinks about it.²¹

In spite of the perplexing questions pointed at the use of the vernacular, Kvitka stuck to his resolution faithfully; he continued to use Ukrainian in prose. When his work became popular, and the names Osnovyanenko and Kvitka became synonymous in literature, he hyphenated his name, making it Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovyanenko.

Kvitka's literary works tend to portray him as being serious, sober and stern at all times. Yet he was kind, pleasant, jovial, considerate, and always looked on the brighter side of life. He enjoyed pleasant company, whether for serious discussions, argument, or light entertainment.²²

The author maintained relations with the common folk throughout his life. There are many instances where Kvitka either adopted or found

20. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Dramaticheskie sochineniya, p. xxxiii.

21. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Tvory, Vol. VI, p. 579.

22. Hryhoriy Kvitka, Tvory, 2nd ed. (L'viv: Prosvita, 1911), Vol. I, p. 4.

homes for some unfortunates who had been maltreated by their masters.

"What was I to do with the unfortunate half-dressed, half-witted old woman?"²³

he exclaimed on one occasion. His relations with his servants were also exceedingly friendly. There is an anecdote that his coachman, Lukiyan,

. . . unceremoniously entered the courtroom when Hryhoriy Fedorovych stayed there too long, and loudly muttered to his stockily-built master: "Is this a home for prolonged sittings? The horses need not have remained out in the cold for a whole half hour."²⁴

Kvitka's experiences of life and the various influences on his character were reflected in his literary works. His seventeen stories written in Ukrainian can be classified into four main groups. Stories with a realistic color in them include such ones as Serdeshna Oksana and Kozyr divka. Among those influenced by sentimentalism is Shchyra lyubov. In the third group, Kvitka's romanticism predominates, as in The Witch of Konotop or Ot tobi i skarb. The fourth group is humorous, represented by The Soldier's Portrait. The author's religious vein must not be overlooked, but this does not form a separate category with the possible exception of Marusya.

Beside devoting his time to literary activities, Kvitka took an active part in Kharkiv society. He was a marshal of the nobility (1827 - 1828), a Kharkiv county judge (1832 - 1840), and chief criminal justice from 1840 until his death in 1843.

* * *

23 Kvitka, Dramaticheskie sochineniya, p. xxvi.

24. Ibid., p. xlii.

Nikolai Gogol was born into a Kozak family. One of Gogol's ancestors held the rank of colonel in the Kozak regiment, served under Jan Kasimir, the King of Poland, and was endowed with a large estate in the Kievan region. Yan Gogol, Nikolai's great-grandfather, moved to an estate called Yanovshchyna, in the Poltava region. This is the origin of his hyphenated surname Gogol-Yanovsky. The estate was afterward renamed Vasylivka, after Vasyl Gogol, Nikolai's father.²⁵ Although Nikolai Gogol felt proud of his noble lineage, he renounced all his noble connections and discarded Yanovsky from his name when he came to Petersburg.

Vasyl Gogol was a landed gentleman of average means. He was a playwright for the Troshchynsky estate, and one of his comedies, Prostak, written in Ukrainian was periodically produced to the present day. His estate consisted of three thousand acres of land, three hundred and eighty-four serfs, a distillery and one or two public houses.²⁶ The income from the estate did not, however, completely meet his domestic expenditure. In order to increase the estate's income Vasyl Gogol founded a market at Vasylivka.

Nikolai's mother, Mariya Ivanovna (Kosyarovsky) was the daughter of a neighboring landowner. She was deeply religious, observing the rites of the Orthodox Church.

There was no church here yet . . . I began to beseech my husband to build a church. He looked at me and said: "Have mercy! How can I build a church when I have fewer than five

25. David Magarshack, Gogol: A Life (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 17.

26. Ibid., p. 17.

hundred rubles," and I replied that God will help . . . It was evident that this was God's will.²⁷

Mariya also believed in premonitions and dreams.²⁸ Mariya Ivanovna was also a visionary and a fatalist. Her son, Nikolai, described this side of her character to his classmate, A. Danilevsky, in a letter dated December 29, 1829:

You know that my mother looks, but does not see; that she does things she never intended doing; and, thinking of her children's happiness, makes them unhappy, and places the whole blame on God, saying that it was God's will that this should happen.²⁹

Nikolai's mother preferred to stay at home, and was always reluctant to travel.³⁰ She married Vasyl Gogol at the early age of fourteen.

Nikolai Vasilievych Gogol-Yanovsky was born on March 20, 1809, on the family estate in Vasylivka. "We had twelve children of whom more than half died Out of six sons, only one remained . . . Then the death of my beloved daughter undermined his health,"³¹ Mariya Ivanovna recorded in her notebook. This left Nikolai the only son in the family whom "God has taken from me."³² (when he left for Petersburg). The family eventually consisted of one daughter older than Nikolai and three younger ones.

Gogol's childhood days were spent in a healthy atmosphere amid the natural beauty of the family estate. As well as his home life, Gogol enjoyed making visits to the estate of D. P. Troshchynsky, a relative on his mother's

27. V. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol: ego zhizn' i sochineniya (Moscow: H. Lesner i D. Sobko, 1905), p. 14.

28. Ibid., p. 15.

29. Ibid., p. 15.

30. Ibid., p. 13.

31. Ibid., p. 15.

32. Ibid., p. 15.

side, at Kybyntsi. "The whole family frequently stayed there. Usually a large number of people gathered at Kybyntsi, acted plays, and there was a beautiful library."³³ His fondness for the Troshchynsky estate, as well as his enthusiasms for acting continued to grow even when Gogol attended Nizhyn Gymnasium.³⁴

Do me a favor, tell me if I can come home for Christmas Please send me a part in a play. Rest assured that I will act it well; I will be very grateful.³⁵

In his early years Gogol showed a keen interest in his surroundings and in the common people whom he observed very closely. In his mind he preserved a picture of the people, their manners and customs. These mental images, supplemented by research and the information which he received from his mother, were later incorporated in his works.³⁶

In keeping with the times, Gogol received his primary education at home under private tutors. In 1818 he entered the provincial school in Poltava. He remained in the school in Poltava for almost three years.

In May of 1821, Gogol was transferred from the provincial school in Poltava to the newly-constructed Prince Bezborodko Nizhyn Gymnasium,

33. L. I. Timofeyev, Klassiki russkoy literatury (Moscow-Leningrad: Ministerstvo prosveshcheniya USSR, 1952), p. 266.

34. In the Ukraine in Gogol's time, a Gymnasium was a secondary school for students preparing to enter university.

35. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol: ego zhizn' i sochineniya, p. 63.

36. N. V. Gogol, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1952), Vol. I, p. 7.

approximately a hundred and twenty miles from Vasylivka. The Gymnasium at Nizhyn owed its existence to the tireless efforts of Prince Alexander A. Bezborodko, its founder and benefactor. He provided generous funds for the Gymnasium in his will.³⁷ The residue of the estate was to go to his brother, Il'ya. Prince Bezborodko died even before the foundation of the Gymnasium was laid. His brother Il'ya died in 1815, also before the construction of the Gymnasium had begun, and he, in turn, bequeathed his estate and the inheritance from his brother's will to the Gymnasium, a total amount of some 605,000 rubles. After eighteen years of effort and monetary bequests from both the Bezborodko brothers, the Nizhyn Gymnasium was authorized to start classes on April 19, 1820. The following year, in May, 1821, Nikolai Gogol was among the students of the newly-constructed Prince Bezborodko Gymnasium.

He was admitted as a paid student. After a year Gogol received a State scholarship, partly from necessity because of his father's inability to pay an annual fee of a thousand rubles, and partly owing to Troshchynsky's influence.

In his early years at the Gymnasium Gogol was unhappy and behaved like a spoiled child. He showed symptoms of frustration and complained constantly about his health. His classmate, A. Danilevsky, described Gogol as a "sickly child . . . He suffered from scrofula and there was a discharge from his ear."³⁸

37. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol: ego zhizn' i sochineniya, p. 191.

38. Magarshack, Gogol: A Life, p. 23.

In his later years at the Gymnasium he showed more stability and made considerably better progress in his work. In thinking of his future, Gogol favored the aesthetic professions; he wavered between musical, acting, artistic and literary aspirations. The literary field seems to have predominated over all the other alternatives. He was an editor of the school journal, The Literary Meteor, in which one of his articles entitled The Brothers Tverdoslavych had appeared. This historical tale was very severely criticized by his classmate, Baziliy, a Greek fugitive from the Turkish massacres of 1821. Gogol also claimed that the ill-fated Hans Kuechelgarten had been written in 1827 at Nizhyn Gymnasium.

It is significant that Gogol did not make very many friends among his classmates. Apart from Vysotsky and Danilevsky, with whom he corresponded periodically in later years, there were only Prokopovych, Kukolnik and Basiliy. Even to these close associates Gogol never really opened his heart and his feelings. On March 1, 1828, he wrote this to his mother:

Hardly anyone has endured so much ingratitude, injustice, icy contempt, etc. . . everyone regards me as an enigma; no one has found out what I am really like. At home I am considered to be wilful. . . At school they all call me a meek fellow, the ideal of simplicity and patience. In one place I am quiet, modest, polite, in another - a sullen, dreamy, uncouth, and so on, in the third - loquacious and tiresome to the extreme; some think I am clever, others that I am stupid. Think what they like of me, but it is only from my true career that you will find out my true character.³⁹

39. Magarshack, Gogol: A Life, p. 24.

This in itself reveals his secretive character, conceitedness, and martyrdom complex which completely baffled his schoolmates. In his heart it seems that at this stage he had already dreamed up a place for himself among prominent men; only time would reveal his greatness, and his true character. Whatever Gogol had in his mind at the time of writing of the letter, lovers of literature certainly have had the opportunity to observe his true career.

His father's death in 1825 suddenly contributed to Gogol's stability. He realized that he would soon have to assume the responsibility of life. This is evident in a letter to his mother dated April 23, 1825, after he had learned of the news.

Do not worry dearest mother, I have borne the blow with the steadfastness of a true Christian. At first, it is true, I was terribly distressed by the news, but I did not let anyone see how grieved I was. When left alone, however, I gave way completely to insane despair. I even wanted to take my life, but God restrained me in time; and in the evening I was only aware of a feeling of sadness, which was in the end transformed into a slight and hardly perceptible feeling of melancholy, mixed with a feeling of reverence for the Almighty. I bless thee, holy faith! It is only in thee that I find consolation and an alleviation of my grief. And so, dearest mother, I am calm now, though I cannot be happy having lost the best of fathers, the truest friend . . . But I have you and I am not as yet crushed by fate . . .⁴⁰

Gogol completed his Gymnasium in 1828. In December of that same year he left for Petersburg in company with Danilevsky. Gogol had letters of introduction and Troshchynsky's letter of recommendation to Kutuzov,⁴¹ the minister of Justice.

40. Magarshack, Gogol: A Life, pp. 26-27.

41. Ibid., p. 46.

After three years in employment during which he was dissatisfied with himself, his work, his remuneration, conditions and employers, Gogol took to writing. In the meantime, he spent his spare time collecting material and writing stories. His first published work appeared in 1830 in the March issue of Otechestvennye zapiski. This unsigned work was entitled Basavryuk, or the Eve of St. John. The first volume of Evenings on a Farm near Dikan'ka appeared in September, 1831, preceding Kvitka's first Ukrainian story by two years. The second volume of Evenings on a Farm near Dikan'ka came out in 1832. Gogol's early works were very well received by the Russian reading public.

In his so-called Ukrainian works we find that Gogol offers the reader a wide range of humor, gaiety, poetry in prose, frightful scenes, manners and customs of the day, folklore, songs and oral traditions. These stories contain a thousand years of Ukrainian folklore presented in fragments. The Evenings on a Farm near Dikan'ka were followed by Mirgorod in 1835, which included the historic novel Taras Bulba.

The Russian writer, Ivan Panaev, metaphorically unrolled the red carpet for Gogol when he wrote in his Literary Reminiscences:

In Russian literature there was a vague feeling of a need of a new direction, and a desire that it should come down from its isolated artistic heights and take an active part in social problems. We were all bored to tears by artists and heroes spouting rhetoric phrases. What we wanted to see was a living man and, especially, a Russian. And at that moment Gogol suddenly made his appearance.⁴²

42. Magarshack, Gogol: A Life, p. 113.

Toward the end of his life, Gogol was overcome by despondency and melancholia. A mystic in religion and a romantic and realistic genius in literature, Gogol's aims exceeded his ability to fulfill them. He died at the early age of forty-three, broken down physically and spiritually, defeated in a hopeless struggle with himself, but recognized as the greatest writer of his time.

To sum up, Nikolai Gogol and Hryhoriy Kvitka stand at the beginning of important periods in their respective fields in literature. Kvitka's prose widened the horizon of the vernacular in Ukrainian literature. His "discovery" of the peasants was an important landmark in Ukrainian literature. Kvitka's importance lies in the fact that he introduced the vernacular, and became the first Ukrainian prose writer to set the pattern for future writers. These contributions earned Kvitka the title of the father of Ukrainian prose.

Like Hryhoriy Kvitka, Nikolai Gogol ushered in a new period in Russian literature. According to N. L. Stepanov:

Gogol's first literary works . . . are characterized by a predominantly romantic attitude toward art and reality . . .

Here we find idealization both of the ancients and of the middle ages . . . in the Evenings on a Farm near Dikan'ka the realistic tendencies of the young writer are manifested . . .

In the mid-thirties [1830's] Gogol confirms that the principles of realistic art are inseparable from life.⁴³

43. N. V. Gogol, Sobranie sochineniy v shesti tomakh, N. L. Stepanov, ed. (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoy literatury, 1953), Vol. VI, p. 389.

Gogol opened wide the field of romanticism and realism in Russian literature. A parallel to Gogol's romanticism and realism can be found in Kvitka's Marusya and the Soldier's Portrait, but there is no evidence that they were written under his influence. Although Kvitka's romantic inclinations were important features of his times, this characteristic was impeded by political circumstances:

The development of Ukrainian romanticism was complicated and tied in with the changes of personal fate of individual writers and political conditions of that difficult period. The romantic cult of personal goodwill and the romantic individualism alongside the flimsy connections among separate centres of Ukrainian life resulted in the fact that the romantic movement disintegrated into a history of separate groups, and partly into biographies of separate individuals, as it was, in fact, even in western romanticism.⁴⁴

N. V. Gogol and H. F. Kvitka were born and raised in similar social and cultural conditions, in a similar background, and both enjoyed the natural beauty of the Poltava region. Both of them mingled with the Ukrainian population to a greater or lesser degree, observed their manners and customs, listened to their folk songs and beliefs, and afterwards incorporated some of them in their works. Compilations of manners, customs and oral traditions already recorded, as well as historical works, were of invaluable assistance to them. In addition, Gogol frequently asked his mother to furnish him with material on aspects of Ukrainian folklore.

Of the two authors, Gogol was less fortunate with regard to the Ukrainian folklore. He was in close contact with the people before he left

44. Dmytro Čiževsky, History of Ukrainian Literature from its Origin to the Realistic Period (New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in US, Inc., 1956), p. 385.

for Nizhyn at the age of twelve, and his frequent visits to the Troshchynsky estate with his father gave him a superficial insight into the life of the Ukrainian common folk. But this direct contact with their customs and oral traditions came before Gogol fully realized the importance of Ukrainian folklore. Nizhyn Gymnasium did not bring him into contact with popular manners and customs. However, whenever Gogol had any free time, he used to visit Magerka, a suburb of Nizhyn. Here he listened to popular stories and folklore and observed the ways of the people. Here is a good evaluation of Gogol's knowledge of Ukrainian folklore:

Writers like Gogol and Zaretsky, although very talented, did not know our [Ukrainian] life adequately, and often compensated by inventiveness . . . They portrayed our [Ukrainian] people as it would appear to them from a distance.⁴⁵

While Gogol had to search for materials to make his personalities in his works behave as they would in actual life, Kvitka mingled freely with the common people, attended their functions and heard innumerable folk stories. One can only marvel that the characters of Gogol's early works followed as closely as they did the pattern of everyday Ukrainian life. Owing to their similar backgrounds and similar source material, both authors immortalized the common folk as well as themselves by their writings.

45. Serhiy Yefremov, Korotka istoriya ukrayins'koho pys'menstva, 2nd revised ed. (Berlin: Dniprovi porohy, 1924), p. 132.

CHAPTER II

THE MARKET PLACE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY UKRAINE

During the lifetime of Gogol and Kvitka, and for centuries prior to their birth, markets had a significant place in popular, social life and development of the population. This is not exclusive to the Poltava region, nor the Ukraine as a whole; it applies to the whole human race to a greater or lesser degree everywhere. From time immemorial, no individual person, clan or tribe of any geographic region had been fully self-sufficient. At the most primitive stages, when they were almost completely self-contained, they still had to turn to some intermediary to satisfy some deficiency; they had to resort to someone or something to replenish their food supply, clothing or tools. The need to seek outside assistance encouraged the more enterprising individuals to meet the demand by forming mobile trade centres. These developed into the markets of the time of Gogol and Kvitka.

The market place, as it is described in the works of our authors, had gone through centuries of development before reaching the stage at which they knew it. The most primitive trade in the Ukraine was carried out along the rivers. The traders were adventurers who defied many inconveniences and hazards to dispose of their wares and to acquire goods in exchange in order to carry on their trade.

By the thirteenth century the old waterway routes were partly replaced by overland caravans to meet the requirements of settlements further away from the waterways. These caravans "brought furs - their

main merchandise - on ox-drawn wagons. They brought salt from the Crimean Lakes with the same kind of wagons."¹

The Ukrainian Hetmanate imposed a duty on imported goods. There were many regulations governing the imports and the extent of duty to be levied. Import duty was gradually increased, and the increase in the levy occasionally ran out of control. Local officials often took bribes.

With the expansion of the settled areas there was a greater demand for supplying commodities to more remote localities.

Cramped by petty and rigorous regulations, restricted by prohibitions, overloaded by various burdens and extortions, the unfortunate half-dead commerce was revived by a system of barter or market.²

Every town had the right to apply for permission to hold a market at a given place. Permission was governed by the size of the population and by the local demand. Such permission was granted by the authorities if the application met the necessary requirements. As early as 1368, permission was granted to the city of Syanok to hold a market, and a definite date was set -

The week following Trinity Sunday, so that traders from various sections of the land could patronize it with different wares to sell, buy and conclude all trade operations without paying duty.³

Exemption from duty was not granted to every locality applying for a permit to hold a market.

1. Mykhaylo Hrushevs'ky, Istoriya Ukrayiny-Rusy (New York: Knyho' spilka, 1955), Vol. VI, p. 8.

2. Ibid. , p. 92.

3. Ibid. , pp.92-93.

Markets were of Germanic influence as it is evidenced by the name itself. The original Jahrmarkt,⁴ hence the Ukrainian version yarmarok, was a sanctioned annual market held each year for a week's duration.

"With the transfer of the German law arrangements to the east into Volyn and the eastern Ukraine, even here markets fell under government regulations, especially in the sixteenth century."⁵ Markets at Sorochyntsi and Lypka, as mentioned in the works of Gogol and Kvitka, were properly applied for and sanctioned by the authorities. Nikolai Gogol's father was the chief initiator of the market in Sorochyntsi.

To view the market in the right perspective at the time of Gogol and Kvitka, one must turn back a page of history over a century in length. This would show a state of affairs barely touched by the influence of the rising civilization of more centralized points. Gogol and Kvitka based their descriptions and portrayed the significance of the market place in the first half of the nineteenth century on personal and contemporary observations.

The primary purpose of a market was to ensure that the people could buy the required commodities, and trade their surplus produce for cash or something of approximately equal value. During the lifetime of the authors, every market was strictly commercial, but there were many secondary

4. Hrushevs'ky, Istoriya Ukrayiny-Rusy, Vol. VI, p. 92,

5. Ibid., p. 93.

features which enhanced the importance of a market. These attributes were not organized by the market, but they became virtually an integral part of it even though they were irrelevant to trade and commerce in the strictest sense. The secondary, as well as the primary, attributes helped the institution of the market to flourish and penetrate smaller centres in order to serve wider masses of population throughout the Ukraine.

At a time when transport and communications were in their infancy, a market place served as a social gathering in a secondary attribute. It gave its participants an opportunity to meet old acquaintances from remote areas, to exchange greetings, and to pass greetings to other members of the family. It also gave them a chance to make new acquaintances. Both Gogol and Kvitka allude to this aspect in their works. "The meeting with a Kum [Godfather to one's child] , when they had not seen one another for a long time . . . prompted our travellers to discuss the market and to relax a while after a long journey."⁶ "Only the slapping of hands of friends is heard from all directions of the market,"⁷ was another of Gogol's remarks about the social aspect of the market.

These gatherings were an occasion for discussing social problems, exchanging opinions, and relating local news, such as deaths, births, sickness and weddings with any other interesting or exciting happenings.

6. N. V. Gogol, Sochineniya (New York: International University Press, n. d.), p. 5.

7. Ibid. , p. 5.

This feature prevails to the present day at public gatherings. The market place offered the people an opportunity to catch up with the news about acquaintances from neighboring villages in the interval between markets. As a rule the participants of a market made a useful outing and enjoyed a break from duty, which was equivalent to a present-day vacation combined with business.

A market could not pass without some discussion of the agricultural questions of most importance to the rural population. News of agricultural successes and reverses was exchanged; some sought advice, and others gave it on matters of importance. It is only natural for people living in similar circumstances and sharing approximately the same hardships, advantages and disadvantages, to voice their opinions when they meet. A crop failure, drought or excessive rains might be timely topics for those whose livelihood depended upon proper climatic conditions. That year, harvest must have been plentiful, according to Gogol. "Don't you think, kinsman, that our wheat will sell well?"⁸ he writes in one scene at the market.

Other people were keenly interested in current prices of produce, grain, stock and domestic articles. This was especially true of those who wanted to buy or sell these goods. For example, a peasant turned around to say something to his daughter, but, hearing the word: wheat - "That magic

8. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 6.

word . . ."⁹ he was immediately distracted.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the prices for agricultural products were not regulated by the cost of production. Supply and demand were the chief factors which determined the prices in any community. For this reason, both the vendor and the purchaser were extremely alert to any mention of prices. Any individual who wanted to acquire or dispose of commodities used the price levels at other markets to confirm the current prices. Purchasers and vendors mingled in the crowd, contacted each other, agreed upon their price, and concluded the deal. In case of an exchange or barter, it often took considerable negotiation, and even haggling to reach an agreement. Both authors avoid descriptions of trade negotiations or the mention of prices.

Apart from its primary purposes, the market provided something of a forum for exchange of political opinions, for rumors and speculation about current events. The Napoleonic wars had precipitated liberal thinking in Russia. The unsuccessful Decembrist rising had preceeded the publication of Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka by six years. Echoes of such events could not have passed unnoticed by those who struggled in subjection. Murmurs of social and political discontent, though veiled and unorganized, were becoming more and more audible.

9. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 5.

As an example of this, Gogol subtly mentioned the people's unfriendliness toward officials in his Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka. One man allowed his feelings to run unchecked when he exclaimed: "The assessor . . . may he not live to wipe his lips from the nobleman's plum liquor . . ." ¹⁰ Feelings of discontent arising from political events were timely topics at markets.

In the Soldier's Portrait, Hryhoriy Kvitka made similar references to the people's mixed feeling of hatred and fear of the soldiery. This work was published in 1833, less than a decade after the Decembrist rising which was suppressed by the supreme authorities with the aid of the armed forces. The Decembrist rising of 1825 eventually culminated in a more outspoken defence of the rights of the serfs. ¹¹ The liberal thinking following the interregnum and the Decembrist rising was considered subversive at the time and construed as a bid for political freedom.

. . . yet it is difficult to say that this [Decembrist rising] was a manifestation of Ukrainian desire for independence since it was closely tied up with Petersburg . . . The Decembrist movement was, however, a prelude to other action. On the one hand it increased the determination of the tsar to maintain order at all cost. ¹²

In spite of the determination, ". . . it is not to be denied that it was the flower of the Guard, and especially the young intellects which had attempted

10. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 6.

11. M. N. Volkonskaya, Zapiski (Chita: Chitinskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1960), p. 3.

12. C. A. Manning, Story of Ukraine (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 165.

this master-stroke of 1825."¹³

Kvitka corroborates Gogol's references to feelings of animosity towards the authorities and their representatives. In the Soldier's Portrait Kvitka writes of a soldier who incensed a group of spectators by an act of petty victimization. ". . . The Muscovite, without excusing himself, took a full bag of pears and went his way as if it were his own."¹⁴ Efforts to retrieve the theft proved fruitless; the soldiers spoke of referring to his superior officers and that was the end of the matter.

Markets were used at times as a cover for political activities.

The unsuccessful Decembrist rising

only served to increase the caution of the members, who dispersed themselves in various places to carry on the work separately, and resolved only to hold their meetings in the future during the time of the yearly markets at Balta, Berditschew [sic] and Kief [sic]."¹⁵

There is another mention of a market place being used in this way: "The whole transaction closed with a resolution to meet again in the year 1826, during the fair at Kiew [sic]."¹⁶

In the hustle and bustle of the market, grave concern over the question of morality was expressed. The people felt that secular life was encroaching upon their morality. In the Soldier's Portrait Kvitka mentioned such an encroachment:

13. Baron R - [Andreas von Rosen] , Russian Conspirators in Siberia, Evelyn St. John Mildmay, trans. (London: Smith Elder & Co., 1872), p. 271.

14. H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1956), Vol. II, p. 15.

15. Baron R - , Russian Conspirators in Siberia, p. 262.

16. Ibid. , p. 265.

Public houses are already introduced in Lypka - may God forbid - as they are in Russia . . . Therefore, when one comes with a vessel . . . the tavern keeper undermeasures . . . Such is the Muscovite belief - to bleed [the people of their possessions] . . ."¹⁷

It is hard to determine what irritated the narrator when he brought up this question at the market. Was it the "undermeasuring," or the adverse effect of the public house on the morality of the population, or both?

Whichever it was, the question of morality was much in evidence at the fair.

In Gogol's Sorochyntsi Market, the author introduced the subject of morality in no uncertain terms. When one out of a group of boys said to a girl sitting on top of a load of hay that he would like "to kiss" her, the girl's mother retorted that the boy was "a good-for-nothing." To add insult to injury, the boy called the girl's mother "a hundred-year-old witch."

"I did not see your mother, but I know she is a good-for-nothing! and your father is good-for-nothing! and your aunt is good-for-nothing! A hundred-year-old! And he is not passed the sucking stage . . ."¹⁸

This, in her estimation, also revealed the type of home from which he came. Morality in the time of Gogol and Kvitka was considered one of the main aspects of life.

Gogol made some interesting remarks concerning religion in his Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka.

17. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 8.

18. Gogol, Sochineniya, pp. 4-5.

Undoubtedly he recognized the deeply pious and religious nature of the Ukrainians, since he often substitutes "Orthodox" for "Ukrainian." Thus in referring to a student who had just completed school, Gogol wrote that he had become such a pedant that "he has even forgotten our Orthodox language."¹⁹ In Mirgorod also Gogol used "Orthodox" instead of "Ukrainian."

"Listen! I will tell you more! Even [Catholic] priests travel throughout the whole of the Ukraine in two-wheeled one-horse carriages . . . they do not harness horses but they simply harness [Orthodox] Christians."²⁰

Beside the question of morals, religious problems were undoubtedly the subject of conversation at the market. Neither Gogol nor Kvitka were very explicit, but they hinted that these questions were discussed. Religion and religious practices had always been dear to the hearts of the Orthodox Ukrainians. The fate of their Church must have been felt keenly by them.

Gogol and Kvitka did not discuss religious problems, but Kvitka did give a broad hint when he wrote. "Why did you stop here? Go away; stand somewhere else, do not disturb the sale of Orthodox wares, and you yourself go even to the devil . . ."²¹

Gogol's Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka are sprinkled with innocent and humorous expressions about the church, yet they are full of historical references. "He [the sorcerer] is for a secret betrayal . . . to sell the

19. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 2.

20. Ibid., p. 121.

21. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 12.

Ukrainian people to the Catholics and to burn the churches."²² These remarks may seem utterly ridiculous, but they are based on historical reality. Perhaps this was Gogol's way of suggesting religious dissatisfaction. "Father Afanasiy only announced that everyone who wishes to make approaches to Basavryuk will be regarded as a Catholic, an enemy of Christ's church and the whole human race."²³ Here again Gogol voices the people's fear of Catholic infiltration; according to Father Afanasiy, the devil's influence and Catholicism were synonymous.

Historically,

for nearly two centuries it had been generally understood that the members of the Union, in submitting themselves to the Papacy, were cutting themselves off from the Ukrainian cause. It had been confidently believed that the Union would swing ultimately into the Roman Catholic Church and that it would lose its identity in the mass of Catholic Poland, exactly as the nobles had done, when they became Polonized and Catholic. This had been a great argument of all the Orthodox and had been the cause of the bitterness that had existed between the two groups.²⁴

Gogol's somewhat derisive remarks about church matter reflected the historical chapter of religious strife in the Ukraine. Ukrainians were reluctant to accept it, and voiced their sentiments, among other places, at the markets.

Gogol, however, mentions the question of morality in passing, and then turns to the market activities.

Noise, abusive language, bellowing, bleating - all this combined into one disagreeable chatter. Oxen, bags, hay, gypsies, pots,

22. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 70.

23. Ibid., p. 16.

24. Manning, Story of Ukraine, p. 129.

women, gingerbread, in motley fashion, shapelessly move in groups and appear before one's eyes.²⁵

This disorderly picture is typical of a busy market scene. Amid the hurly-burly of the market, the day would not have been complete without some form of entertainment. This was welcomed by the rural population whose entertainment was limited in the time of Gogol and Kvitka. The markets supplied amusements for their participants which were quite different from the entertainment connected with the annual cycle of religious festivities. We know of such traditional entertainments at St. Andrew's day which falls on December 13th. Another outstanding example is St. John's Eve. Nikolai Gogol devoted a whole story to the merriment, fun and frolic, on the eve of St. John. But the market entertainments were of a different type from those of the annual holidays.

The side attractions at the market served a dual purpose. They furnished entertainment to those who were not actively engaged in business transactions, and the spectators' voluntary contribution earned a living for the gypsy with a trained bear, for example. Gogol and Kvitka barely mention the side attraction in their works.

Another form of entertainment at markets were the bandurists with their banduras, a musical instrument shaped like a mandolin but

25. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 5.

much larger in size. Some sources claim that the bandura is a descendant of the kobza, an Asiatic instrument. Another theory is that it is a heritage from Ukrainian prehistory.²⁶ Neither of these theories has been authenticated thus far, though there are weighty arguments on both sides. There is also a third theory.

The bandura appeared in England in 1563, but already in 1580 Ukrainian scholarly sources mention bandurists, from which it would appear that in some seventeen years the bandura passed from England to Spain, from Spain to Italy, from Italy to Poland, and finally from Poland to the Ukraine.²⁷

This theory seems highly improbable. We find, however, that the bandura was a popular instrument in the Ukraine since mid-seventeenth century.²⁸

Gogol mentions the bandura simply as an instrument, attaching no special significance to it. Ukrainian culture owes much to this national instrument. Taras Shevchenko called his first volume of poems Kobzar, likening it to a bard who sang the glory of his people accompanied by the kobza.

The forerunner of the bandura, the kobza, had from three to five strings; in the eighteenth century it had twelve or more - and now, the redesigned instrument, the bandura, has up to thirty-five strings. In the

26. V. Yemets, Kobza ta kobzari (Berlin: Ukrayins'ke slovo, 1923), pp. 7 - 21.

27. Ibid., pp. 17 - 18.

28. Ukrayins'ka zahal'na entsykl'opedia (Stanislaviv: Soyuz kooperatyv, n.d.), p. 482.

seventeenth century the kobza was gradually replaced by the bandura.

Incidentally, Gogol was quite consistent in using "bandura" in the Kozak story, Taras Bulba, as well as in his earlier works. Levko, for example, appears "with a bandura in his hands."²⁹

For almost a half a century, the typical bandurist was a sorry figure. During the time of Gogol and Kvitka the vast majority of the bandurists were blinded veterans from the Kozak armies.

As in the case of lyre players, separate schools were maintained for the kobzars, where a kobzar passed on his art to his blind students . . . A student did not remunerate his teacher . . . but the teacher used to send him to markets, and all the proceeds he derived - dry bread, flour, pork, money etc. - went to the teacher.³⁰

In Taras Bulba, Gogol made frequent references to bandurists.

"For a long time the moon saw large groups of musicians . . . with banduras . . ."³¹ "There will be a bandurist with a gray beard . . ."³²

Afterwards the bandurists glorified the successes of the Kozaks for a long time."³³ ". . . The gray-haired bandurists walking in two's and three's . . ."³⁴

It is interesting that according to Gogol, Kozak forces were entertained by bandurists. Considering the period of the Kozak battles, about the first

29. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 22.

30. Voznyak, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury, pp. 450 - 451.

31. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 119.

32. Ibid., p. 143.

33. Ibid., p. 147.

34. Ibid., p. 150.

of the seventeenth century, Gogol would have been justified in referring to the kobza, or at least both instruments, in this period. Gogol, however, insisted on using the bandura throughout. Kvitka, on the other hand, avoids any mention of the instrument by name in his Soldier's Portrait, although the phrase "aged people sang about Lazarus"³⁵ might imply that the instrumentalist was an ex-Kozak graduate from the bandurist school as mentioned above.

Both authors mention that, beside the heads of families and perhaps their wives, young people frequented the markets. They came to the market to "window-shop", to use a modern term, to inspect and admire trinkets, jewellery, new materials . . . Many of the young people came to make new friends, and even to look for a husband or wife. In Gogol's works, Paraska promptly found a man of her choice whom her father accepted as his future son-in-law. "Shall we shake hands? Now, newly selected son-in-law, let us have a mohorych [a bargain drink] ,"³⁶ Gogol wrote.

Hryhoriy Kvitka, on the other hand, was more subtle in his descriptions of making friends and courtship. One girl dropped her handkerchief hoping that the soldier would pick it up and start a conversation. But the soldier took no notice. Much to her surprise, she learned that it was a painting by a professional artist. Both authors mention the presence of young folks in their market scenes.

35. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 14.

36. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 6.

Kvitka mentioned a remarkable character in one of his works, a drunkard with a great sense of merriment. He was a chumak, a happy-go-lucky salt trader.

Matviy Shpon sold his salt, settled his accounts and cleared the money . . . No one knows where his cap is, he has thrown it at someone and run away . . . He sang . . . and wherever there was a puddle of water, he started dancing. He splattered and splashed himself . . . He had a bottle in one hand, a glass in the other . . . He drank and treated others; if anyone refused, he emptied the liquor and rebuked him . . . The bottle is not empty yet, he has thrown it to the ground . . .³⁷

The mention of the chumak's appearance at the market was highly appropriate, as this class of traders had played an important role in the life of the Ukrainian people by supplying its salt.³⁸ Salt traders, rather like the early North American fur traders, virtually traded trinkets for valuable loads of salt. "For ten arrows, the famous Kievan arrows with eagle feathers, the Tartars let them load their boat full of salt."³⁹ The two salt fields created lively competition which evidently led to exorbitant duty until the trade laws were properly revised and regulated. The Black Sea traders made long, tedious and dangerous treks over the open steppe, exposed to attacks by the nomads. When single journeys became unsafe, the chumaks travelled in company.⁴⁰

37. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 14.

38. Hrushevs'ky, Istoriya Ukrayiny-Rusy, Vol. VI, p. 18.

39. Ibid., pp. 18 - 20.

40. Ibid., p. 7.

Beside contributing to the economy of the Ukraine, the chumaks made an equally valuable contribution to its cultural wealth. Chumak songs and stories present an accurate picture of the life and character of these hardy traders. They were constantly exposed to adverse climatic conditions, hardships, isolation from society and depredations by lurking nomads. They broke the monotony of their travel by improvising their own entertainment and relaxation during stop-overs. Like isolated mountaineers and sailors who have to resort to their own ingenuity, the chumaks, likewise, created their own costumes and dances. Their dances depict their carefree living, requiring vigorous, muscular movements, and a whip in hand. Every movement of the dance characterizes their tedious journey, the whistling steppe winds, the rustling of grass or the crack of the whip. It is still a popular dance today. Their dress consisted of a wide-brimmed straw hat, a white shirt riding on top of the trousers with a bow at the neck, and a homespun belt. The legs of the white trousers are in puttees and reinforced by a cord running spirally. They wore leather sandals.

Thanks to their itinerant livelihood, the Black Sea traders developed an eccentric pattern of behavior. Chumak songs sometimes portray them as sentimentalists pining away over the loss of their oxen, or of a faithful companion who passed away on the journey. Other chumaks are represented as carefree, fickle lovers who would rather go journeying than lead a settled life. Still others are pictured as downright drunkards who spend all their money on drink, very often even pawning their oxen and wagons,

and leaving their wives and children destitute.⁴¹

Ukrainians were acquainted with the chumaks and their behavior either by direct contact or by songs, oral traditions or descriptions such as that found in Kvitka's Soldier's Portrait.

Both authors give^a general description of the market place in their works. As a background to his Sorochyntsi Market, Gogol has very skilfully woven many exciting incidents around it. The market gave the author's story a realistic background. This was made more definite by using a real place - Sorochyntsi - near the author's birthplace.

Kvitka's market scene centred around the soldier's portrait. The author describes the artist with such precision and reality that the story seems real from the opening sentence, and stays real as Kvitka develops the plot. The famous artist "took his soldier - if anyone knows - all the way to Lypka,"⁴² a town well-known for its market. Around this work of art the author develops his market scene. The whole story is told with such verisimilitude that the reader, as with Gogol, gets an impression of reality.

It is worth noting that both authors mention a considerable amount of historical materials without troubling to present it to their readers. Their individual scenes are short, yet long enough for the reader to appreciate them and to get a complete picture. There are no marked signs of disjointedness

41. M. T. Ryl's'ky and K. H. Huslysty, ed., Ukrayins'ka narodna tvorchist': istorychni pisni (Kiev: Akademiya nauk Ukrayins'koyi RSR, 1961), pp. 619 ff.

42. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 7.

to mar the easy flow of changing scenes. Through the authors' lively flow of thought, a reader can visualize the abundance of wares, the multitude of people, the vendors eager to dispose of their goods, and an equal number of purchasers searching for bargains; one can almost hear the uproar and shouting from the market-goers.

Detailed descriptions of actual transactions, the location of wares in the market, the amounts or the approximate amounts of produce or other goods for sale are avoided by both authors. Neither do they quote the prices of the goods for sale. "Some buy, some trade, some swear, some enquire about prices, some argue, some summon friends; some call their wives, some go to drink mohorych . . ." ⁴³ This was all that Kvitka disclosed about the actual bargaining.

Gogol also refrains from quoting quantities or prices. The peasant who had just come to the market, "approached one wagon, felt another, sought for prices; and in the meantime, his thoughts ceaselessly circled around the ten bags of wheat and the old mare . . . brought for sale." ⁴⁴ Both authors mention the innumerable products, goods, household articles, buns and cakes, yet they are mentioned incidentally, and the reader's mind is not burdened with excessive paraphernalia.

43. Kvitka, Tvory, pp. 13 - 14.

44. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 5.

Neither author described his market as they might have been in their time. Both wrote about and for their contemporaries who were equally well-acquainted with the market and, in many instances, knew more about them than the authors themselves. An attempt to describe the market in a matter-of-fact way would have reduced the literary value of their work; it would have produced dry documentaries rather than interesting stories set in a market scene. The literary skill of both authors turned the familiar market place into a source of enjoyable reading matter.

CHAPTER III

LOVE SCENES IN GOGOL AND KVITKA

"Love constitutes one of the most interesting popular beliefs; it is a popular belief with all peoples and will never outgrow its need, because love exists and always will exist in every nation."¹ This premise is as true today as it was in prehistoric times, and as it was during the lives of Gogol and Kvitka. When creating man, Almighty God also created woman to keep him company throughout life, and to reciprocate his love and honor; they were to care and be cared for and to walk hand-in-hand along the path of life in prosperity and in adversity until "death us do part."² Man respected the Divine will, as the documentary evidence of chroniclers and historians since time immemorial has shown.

Love, marriage and married life have existed in the Ukraine as time-honored institutions. With Christianity, marriage became a Sacrament, a religious act blessed by the Creator, then reaffirmed by our Saviour in Cana of Galilee, the scene of the first miracle. Christianity taught believers to treat marriage with respect, the utmost sobriety and sincerity. The contract was to be inviolable by the contracting parties and by outsiders. This thesis prevails throughout Kvitka's Marusya. Although Gogol surrounds

1. M. Markevich, Obychaï, poveriya, kukhnya i napitki malorossiyan (Kiev: I. Davidenko, 1860), p. 95.

2. Excerpt from marriage vows.

the marriage preparations in the Eve of St. John with fun and frolics, he nevertheless, retains the atmosphere of respect in his treatment of the events leading to the marriage.

Love and marriage were not confined exclusively to young people. Other people also got married: elderly bachelors, old maids, widows and widowers. In literary works, a colorful love story or an elaborate wedding were usually desired for young people who got married. The basic theme in Kvitka's Marusya is the love story of Vasyl and Marusya, while the events leading to the wedding in Gogol's Eve of St. John took place amidst the gaiety of the eve of St. John. The love stories in both authors centre around two young men. Both were poor, homeless and orphaned from childhood, and both sought the hands of brides from wealthy families.

There is nothing extraordinary in Gogol or Kvitka in making well-to-do young ladies fall in love with orphans. Ukrainian folklore contains frequent references to orphans falling in love with young ladies from higher stratum of society. In the majority of cases, orphaned young men were highly intelligent, although illiterate; persevering and aggressive. Their integrity was a commendable characteristic, and they usually emerged victorious in their undertakings. There are children's bedtime stories where orphans even succeed in marrying king's daughters.

Before the marriage contract was finalized and confirmed, whether in make-believe or in actual life, orphans were expected to prove their worth. Their success was judged on their merit, presence of mind and virtuosity. The performance of some superhuman feat was often demanded

of them as a final test to prove their worth.

In everyday life an orphan's lot was unenviable in the times of which we are writing. This was particularly true of orphans left without any property, home or means or subsistence. They had to suffer great hardship and even abuses from their guardians or employers; they virtually had to "elbow" their way through life. Their hard life made them mature at an early age, it made them serious and grateful for the mercies that came their way. Honesty, virtue and common sense were their only way to gain the good graces of their masters.

In the olden days material wealth played an important part in matrimony. A wealthy young man or a daughter of well-to-do parents were assured that they could marry, and in many cases they married the person of their choice. This also applied to wealthy orphans. An impoverished orphan had to rely on the good will of his master; he had to be patient, obedient and diligent, and even suffer abuses without any audible complaints.

But the marriage of an impoverished or orphaned young man to a socially superior or wealthy girl was almost unthinkable. If, however, the impoverished young man was able to prove his worth, this might be taken into consideration. In such cases the class barriers could be broken, a person from a lower class might be allowed to promote himself, and the marriage would be sanctioned. Instances of socially and economically unequal parties can be found in the works of both Gogol and Kvitka.

In the Eve of St. John, an unfortunate young man, Peter, works for a wealthy landowner, Korzh. Peter and Pidorka, the landowner's daughter,

fall in love, and they remain unsuspected until the master spies them in one another's arms. This enrages the father.

"Father, father!" exclaims Pidorka's six-year-old brother, "Do not punish Peter!"

The master, "having placed the whip on the wall, led him [Peter] quietly out of the house. 'If you show up in the house at any time, or even at the window, then listen, Peter . . .'"³ Gogol indicates that the master did not intend to tolerate any of the servant's approaches to his daughter.

Although successful in his daily duties as well as in his secret love for Pidorka, Peter was soon threatened by a rival, ". . . news began to circulate the village that a certain lyakh [a Pole], decorated with gold, with a moustache, a sword, spurs, and pockets jingling . . . had approached Korzh."⁴ Gogol then described the heart-rending feeling that overcame Peter and Pidorka.

Kvitka's wealthy landowner was more blunt, but he showed more understanding when he refused his blessing for the marriage of Vasyl and Marusya. "You are an orphan," said Naum Drot, ". . . you have no one to offer you help."⁵ This remark is typical of Kvitka's moralizing style. Naum Drot seemed very broad-minded about the refusal. Should Vasyl marry his daughter, impoverished as he is, "your children will grow up

3. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 17.

4. Ibid., p. 17.

5. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 63.

without any upbringing, in poverty, in misery, in illiteracy . . . "6

According to Kvitka, material wealth facilitated life and offered social, moral and educational advantages.

The parents' consent or blessing for a wedding was a very important custom in the days of Gogol and Kvitka. The same tradition can be seen in the Old Testament. Rulers blessed and anointed their successors, the head of the household blessed his successor, and the father blessed the proposed couple's marriage, as in the case of Ruth. With Christianity the parents' blessings were identified with the will of the Creator who blessed family life. Ukrainians observed this act very religiously. It added dignity and seriousness to the proposed act of marriage; it was the final reminder that matrimony was a life contract "for better, for worse."7

During the lifetime of our authors young folk had their own personal choice in love even as they do at the present time. Such choices were not dictated by any ulterior motives; they were mutual feelings of the heart, the innermost secret uncritical feelings. Mutual feelings of love were not an assurance that the couple would become partners for life. Economic considerations were important factors in sanctioning a marriage. However, love's alluring daydreams were frequently marred by the plans of parents. Gogol has a ready example of what could happen even though the father only assumed that he had found a suitor for his daughter.

6. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 63.

7. Excerpt from marriage vows.

"Well, wife! I have found a suitor for our daughter."⁸ This example, however, did not pose any heartaches to anyone, for Paraska did not have anyone in mind before she met Holopupenko at the market. It was love at sight; Holopupenko and Paraska had embraced one another and were "telling love stories"⁹ to one another before the father "selected" his son-in-law. "Well, Solopiy, here, as you see, I and your daughter have fallen in love with one another and we want to live together for ever."¹⁰ The father approved their sudden decision.

During the lives of our authors it was also customary for parents to select a wife or husband for their son or daughter. Parents who were proud, wealthy and distinguished members of the community, and who considered their son or daughter's choice a match unsuitable to their social status, were more likely to adhere to this custom. These parents would select a family of their own standing and discuss matrimony without their children's knowledge. If a girl's parents responded favorably, then her own preference was ignored. If this proved contrary to the proposed bride's will, protests were of no avail. In the Eve of St. John, Gogol mentions the only possible protest young people were able to offer. "Tell him [Peter], that they speak of a wedding, only there will be no music at our wedding . . . I will not go dancing with my groom; they will carry me out . . ."¹¹ This is a

8. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 7.

9. Ibid., p. 7.

10. Ibid., p. 7.

11. Ibid., p. 17.

euphemism for death. The same expression prevails to the present day. In Gogol, it was only a violent, threatening protest, but in actual life there were many instances where the protests went beyond threats.

In the normal way the parents announced their plans to the children, and then, regardless of the children's reaction, both families made preparations for the formal granting of permission for the marriage of their son and daughter. The granting of permission was a solemn, elaborate and ceremonious procedure.

When a girl approached the age of marriage, she had to make preparations for the ceremony of granting of permission, and then for the wedding. According to the tradition of the time (a tradition which is still alive in some places), each girl devoted the pre-Easter lenten period to preparing the necessary materials for her wedding. She had to cross-stitch scarves or runners as well as doing other embroidery or fancy work. This handwork was used for many different purposes. There were articles for use during the receiving of matchmakers, cloths on which to place the kalachi (fancy braided bread), bands to tie the couple's hands during the wedding ceremony, mats to kneel on during the pronouncement of the marriage vows, and other things for other occasions connected with the wedding and wedding ceremony. Each individual act required a separate piece of handwork, and it was the duty of each girl to prepare them personally.

The ceremony of granting of permission for marriage was both serious and entertaining. Whenever a love affair approached its culminating

point, or when the parents considered their son ought to get married, the prospective bridegroom selected two elderly and respectable gentlemen to act as matchmakers. It was their duty to conduct all the formal preliminaries for the wedding on his behalf, after the negotiations behind the scenes had been concluded.

The matchmakers went to the home of the prospective bride at a pre-arranged time to announce the bridegroom's intentions openly and formally. "Accompanied by his matchmakers . . . to whom he [the prospective bridegroom] gives staffs as a sign of authority, and bread and liquor, he proceeds to the home of the proposed bride, with whom the young man had concluded an agreement in advance."¹² The actual ceremony began at the door of the bride's parent's home.

Knocking at the door, the matchmakers pose to the mother as "hunters" tracking down a "marten." A lengthy traditional dialogue then follows between the matchmakers and the mother. The matchmakers pretend they are determined to find the "marten," while the mother pretends to oppose their entrance into the house. Toward the end of the dialogue the matchmakers make a plea to the mother to surrender the "prey," otherwise they threaten to use force to capture the "prey" (the girl). At this point the matchmakers are ceremoniously ushered into the house.

12. V. Shcherbakivs'ky, "Starovynny praukrayins'ky sotsiyal'ny ustriy na osnovi analizu ukrayins'koho vesillya," Literaturno-naukovy visnyk, XXXII, No. I (May, 1948), p. 63.

The procedure at the door is conducted in the absence of the bride-elect; by tradition the young lady has to keep out of sight. When the party enters the house, the mother then calls the daughter.

They, without fail, ask for the girl's consent, and after the consent of the girl and the mother, the latter asks the girl to bring the embroidered scarves [or runners] especially prepared for the occasion. She ties them around the matchmaker's arms . . . Meanwhile the matchmakers place the bread and a bottle of liquor on the table.¹³

After drinking health to each other and sampling the bread, the matchmakers mention the amount of the dowry. Then they talk about the young couple's future while they are all seated around the table in a cheerful atmosphere, enjoying a full-course meal prepared by the lady of the house. When all the technicalities pertaining to the wedding are agreed upon, the bridegroom and the matchmakers depart.

While Gogol only mentions in passing some of the customs connected with weddings, Kvitka gives a detailed account¹⁴ of these customs in Marusya. "It was Tuesday. Towards evening they [the girl's parents] were expecting the matchmakers."¹⁵ This statement confirms Shcherbakivsky's findings that such meetings were prearranged. Kvitka also quotes a long dialogue which transpired between the matchmakers and the mother of the house.

13. Shcherbakivs'ky, "Starovynny praukrayins'ky sotsiyal'ny ustriy . . .", p. 63.

14. Kvitka, Tvory, pp. 55-59.

15. Ibid., p. 71.

This dialogue may sound like a well-rehearsed conversation, but in reality it only follows the traditional pattern. In Kvitka the matchmakers introduce themselves as follows: "We are German people, and we are come from a Turkish land; we are hunters, skilful youths . . ."¹⁶ This portion of the dialogue rhymes in the original: Nimechchyna - Turechchyna, the Ukrainian names for Germany and Turkey respectively. The same applies to lovtsi - molodtsi, hunters - youths. This rhythmic and rhyming conversation between the mother and the matchmakers carries on for about three pages in Kvitka's work. The conversation is figurative; the matchmakers were at liberty to mention anything which rhymed and was presented in an embellished figure of speech.

The conversation is long and seemingly nonsensical (representing a survival of the pre-Christian customs), and practised long in advance. This does not prevent it from appearing spontaneous, for some people have a natural aptitude to perform certain social functions of everyday life without rehearsing. In ancient times, for example, some women were able to relive the life of a deceased person, and present it with heart-rending oratory and lamentations at the funeral. The lamentation represented the feelings of the mourners, or it was intended as a message from the deceased to the surviving members of the family. The contents of the lamentation depended on the circumstances. "The old Kievan Chronicles describe the lamentation and the funeral feast

16. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 56.

at the grave of [Prince] Ihor which was fittingly presented by Princess Olha in accordance with the custom."¹⁷ This type of community wailing is also mentioned in the twelfth century secular poem, Slovo o polku Ihorevim.

"Our priceless Slovo o polku Ihorevim presents the collective lament of the women of Rus [Ukrainian women] over the loss of their husbands killed in Ihor's wars . . ."¹⁸

Those who were able to give a good performance at weddings or other public functions would be invited to repeat the performance at subsequent weddings in the neighborhood. The same was true of matchmakers. Those who were witty, jovial, bold, and able to use figurative speech in verse, and to express their mission pleasantly, conventionally, and spiritedly, received a public acclaim. The more poetic and elaborate, the better it was appreciated and remembered. They could be compared to a present day master of ceremony.

The dialogues that resulted were taken from life. They were not written down or rehearsed; they were handed down from generation to generation and improved with the passage of time. The matchmaker's portion of the conversation had to correspond with the responses of the mother, and so initiative, wit, common sense and the knowledge of oral traditions were imperative for a successful matchmaker. Shcherbakivsky

17. Mykhaylo Hrushevs'ky, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury (New York: Knyho-spilka, 1959), Vol. I, p. 116.

18. Ibid., p. 116.

introduced his prospective bridegroom's representatives as "hunters;" in Kvitka's works they were "German adventurers." The terminology was of little concern; presentation played the most important role.

It is interesting to note that both authors followed with considerable exactitude the popular traditions about marriage. Shcherbakivsky attempted to reconstruct a Ukrainian wedding from old wedding songs and ceremonies. He believed that the family was matriarchal in the olden days, claiming that the mother's consent was sufficient to sanction of marriage.

Neither of our authors followed the ancient customs of the matriarchal system, but preferred the contemporary matrimonial procedure. Gogol's Eve of St. John does not include any description of the preliminary proceedings. It is difficult to determine exactly who granted permission from his account. There is a broad hint that the problem was solved jointly. In Kvitka's works the old spirit of matriarchy had disappeared; the father plays the dominant role. In Marusya, however, Kvitka's patriarchy may be a result of the mother's frailty and continuous sickness; it is, perhaps, for this reason that the mother performs the lesser function; she is present, but is not the central figure.

In the works of both authors, the prospective bridegrooms are poverty-stricken orphans with no home and no security. Both of them win the hearts of socially-superior young ladies, and they are attracted to one another by a mutual feeling of love. The only objection to marriage in both authors' works is the bridegrooms' poverty. While Peter's character is admirable,

the wealthy lyakh (Pole) appeals to the parents because of his prosperity. In his Eve of St. John, Gogol very skilfully avoids revealing his personal feelings in this matter.

In Kvitka's story the parents recognize Vasyl's integrity as well as his financial inability to buy his freedom from military service. Naum Drot was very firm but very fatherly in refusing permission for his marriage. "Vasyl, come tomorrow, all by yourself, without anyone else; then I will tell you everything. I have no more to say, farewell."¹⁹ Afterward he said to Marusya, "You are young and foolish. Go to bed, my daughter; tomorrow you will be older than today, and as a result more sensible."²⁰

Vasyl came back as he was told. "Vasyl, listen . . . and do not interrupt. Because you have seen her eyes and cheeks, and seen that she is beautiful all round, you praise her; I am not speaking about her body, but about her soul"²¹ (*italics mine*). Drot's long explanation was sound and logical. "Bring a certificate stating that you have bought your freedom with your own money and I will then bless Marusya with both hands . . ."²² Vasyl undertook to cure his illiteracy and to buy his freedom. This venture eventually mellowed the hearts of Marusya's parents and assured him of their marriage.

19. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 59.

20. Ibid., p. 61.

21. Ibid., p. 62.

22. Ibid., p. 64.

The Eve of St. John is principally written about the traditional observance of this annual festivity, and Gogol allots very little time and space to his love scenes. The author simply informs the reader what has happened in the love story. Nonetheless, Gogol does not forsake his rejected suitor in a dejected state. He miraculously acquires a large sum of money which helps to open the hearts of his sweetheart's parents, so that they finally allow him to marry her.

Both Kvitka's lengthy and detailed descriptions and Gogol's brief and casual remarks in their love scenes were evidently modelled on the traditional customs of their time, which had evolved over the centuries. The samples quoted above reflect the general attitude of both authors in their works. Gogol did not undertake any lengthy description of love, and it is difficult fully to evaluate his knowledge of Ukrainian customs. Kvitka not only described the wedding customs in detail, but indulged in moralizing and preaching in the course of his narrative. Whereas Gogol saw humanity in action and recorded his observations candidly, Kvitka searched human souls, evaluated the present, and looked into the future.

In spite of Kvitka's moralizing, didacticism and idealization, and Gogol's matter-of-fact style, there is a striking resemblance in their treatment of this subject. Both authors followed the traditions of Ukrainian folklore, and both used only the more refined aspects of the wedding ceremony, which had been sanctioned by time-honored custom and handed down to posterity. Hence the reader gets the impression that both authors have a common cultural background, and that they treated the subject matter as it suited the plot of their stories.

CHAPTER IV

LATINISMS. DRINKING AND DRUNKENNESS

The use of Latinisms and similar cumbersome language which is found in the works of Gogol and Kvitka did not occur accidentally, or merely as a stylistic ornament. It was not a coincidence that both authors used the technique, but it was not a device to conceal any underlying thoughts. By "Latinisms" we mean words or phrases distorted with Latin endings or interpolations which render the particular passage incomprehensible, ambiguous or cumbersome. It may be a Russian or a Ukrainian word with a typical Latin -us ending, or an old Church Slavic form weighted with a Latin suffix to make the sense or sentence complex and unintelligible to the average reader unless he ponders over its meaning.

We have noticed earlier, in the market scene, for example, that both authors used everyday incidents with a definite purpose. Both authors had their own specific reason for using this mongrel language in their works. There were other reasons for using macaronic language besides the authors' own fondness for it.

Strictly speaking, Poltava and its surrounding territory were too far removed from Latin or Roman influences to warrant using the language in their writings. This macaronic language, however, had deep roots in history which the populace felt directly or indirectly, which was why both authors included it in their works.

In 1054 Christendom was divided into eastern and western spheres of influence. Rome became the centre of the western or Roman Catholic

Church, while Constantinople became the centre of the Eastern Orthodox Church. As both centres strengthened their positions in their respective spheres of influence, the breach between the two Churches widened and deepened. At times purely human motives ruled the churchmen instead of the Divine will. The Roman Catholics had inherited the glory of the Roman Empire, and their pride in the past partly motivated the Roman Bishops to contest for supremacy in the Church. Byzantium was also proud of its cultural heritage and its brilliant past.

Moreover, these early sentiments were continued in the Church strife of later years. Instead of accepting the status quo, the Churches made efforts to win one another's faithful over to their fold. As early as 1439, the Council of Florence made efforts to draw the Orthodox world into the Roman orbit. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the Turkish pressure on the European mainland, the importance of the Byzantine Patriarchate had weakened, and at times it was left to the mercy of the Turkish secular rulers. One of the consequences of this unfortunate political situation was the enhancement of the autonomy of the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine.

The monastery school which Hryhoriy Kvitka attended would certainly have taught this period of church history in detail. Gogol's frequent use of

"Orthodox" in the sense of Ukrainian, and his satirical portraits of the Catholics go hand in hand with an unconscious belief that the Orthodox Church had survived because of the perseverance of the faithful.

The main body of the church realized that the Church Union was a means to divide and weaken the position of the Orthodox Church; the Roman encroachment provoked a vigorous wave of protests. Metropolitan Petro Mohyla (1596-1647) recognized that the safest precautionary measure against Roman Catholic infiltration was to strengthen the position of the Orthodox Church, otherwise there would be efforts "to sell the Ukrainian people to the Catholics and burn the Christian churches," as Gogol wrote in Great Revenge.¹

Numerous writers published their treatises in defence of Orthodoxy. Since Roman Catholic writers used Latin in their religious and polemical writings against Orthodoxy, Metropolitan Petro Mohyla introduced Latin into the Kiev Academy curriculum to enable Orthodox scholars and theologians to answer their attacks; Latin was to serve a broader purpose of introducing the contemporary lingua Franca of scholarship and diplomacy in the Ukraine.

By the end of the eighteenth century the Roman Catholics had made little progress with the Ukrainians. The Orthodox faithful were well-informed of the Roman Catholics' activities and they remained firm in their beliefs

1. Gogol, Sochineniya (New York: International University Press, n.d.), p. 70.

in the face of possible political oppression. As if to point out the fruitlessness of the Catholic campaign, Gogol wrote in the Great Revenge: "The noble-men rejoice . . . and ridicule Orthodoxy; they call the Ukrainian people their serfs . . ." ² He evidently sympathized with the oppressed Ukrainian Orthodox population.

Gogol gives another striking instance of religious oppression in Taras Bulba:

"Tell us, then, you son of a dog, what is being done!" shouted someone from the crowd, evidently losing patience.

"The times are such nowadays that the holy churches are no longer ours."

"Why are they not ours?"

"Now they are on lease . . ."

"He is lying . . ."

"Listen! I will tell you more . . ." ³

This casual conversation reflects a true period in the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church; it was the sad fate of those who held firm.

Latin, however, remained on the curriculum of the Kievan Academy and all the educational institutions of the Ukraine. The Prince Bezborodko Gymnasium in Nizhyn, where Gogol was taught, also had the Latin language

2. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 72.

3. Ibid., p. 121.

on its curriculum.⁴ "The most important subjects - Latin . . . history and geography . . ."⁵ were offered in Nizhyn Gymnasium.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century some Latin continued to be taught at the educational institutions in the Ukraine. Beside the students, others picked up Latin words at random and used them to display their pretended erudition. Others poked fun at these pseudo-scholars by attaching Latin suffixes to Ukrainian works. Still others used Latin as a device to baffle and deceive their parents with the nonsensical phrases and expressions. Sometimes the parents found to their amazement that their sons had forgotten their mother tongue. "One student . . . came home and became so Latinized that he even forgot his Orthodox language."⁶ This humorous remark has much truth in it.

By the time of Kvitka and Gogol, there were regularly a number of wandering students who had nowhere to go and no one to turn to in the summer. "During the summer holidays the students dispersed . . . throughout . . . the Ukraine . . . and spread . . . the resources of their scholastic wisdom throughout the country. Some gained financial remuneration for the following year."⁷ The two authors were acquainted with the life of the wandering students and the anecdotes that existed about them.

4. Mykhaylo Voznyak, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury (L'viv: Prosvita, 1924), Vol. III, pp. 24-25.

5. Ibid., p. 24.

6. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 2.

7. Voznyak, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury, Vol. III, pp. 24-25.

The blending of languages by the half-educated wandering students about which many variegated anecdotes have sprang up . . . the students should have conversed in Latin, but not having acquired a sufficient vocabulary, they admitted eccentricities, such as: Let me go to domum meam (to my home).⁸

Gogol speaks of the wandering students in his Viy.

Those who had no shelter turned to one of their friends. Philosophers and theologians worked na konditsii, i. e. they undertook to teach or to prepare the children of wealthy families, and received annually new shoes, and sometimes a frock-coat.⁹

Once . . . three students of a theological college turned from the main road to a side road intending to replenish their sack at the closest farm since it had become empty a long time ago.¹⁰

Neither Kvitka nor Gogol were innovators in using Latinisms in their works. Students had started the habit in conversation before the first printed Latinisms appeared in Kotlyarevsky's poem Eneida, published in 1798. Kotlyarevsky's poem reads in part:

Aeneas, noster magnus panus
And Troianorum mighty prince
A-roaming o'er the sea, a gypsy,
Ad te, O rex, has sent us nunc.
Rogamus, domine Latine,
Do not destroy our wretched heads.
Permitte us to live among you
E'en for pecuniam or gratis.
We all will thank you always satis
For your beneficentia. (IV, 46)¹¹

8. Voznyak, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury, Vol. III, p. 24.

9. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 162.

10. Ibid., p. 163.

11. Cited in C. A. Manning, Ukrainian Literature: Studies of the Leading Authors (Jersey City: Ukrainian National Association, 1944), p. 29.

In order to reproduce Kotlyarevsky's thought in poetic form, the translator used an English word "a gypsy" instead of the original "tsyhanus." Instead of the original "caput," the translator made a similar substitution by using the English word "head."

Other examples of macaronic language can be found in Vasyl Narizhny's Bursak.

In the Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka, Gogol mentioned a student who wanted to impress his parents with his knowledge of Latin. He even had his parents worried because they believed that he had forgotten his native language. The prankster pretended that he did not understand anything that was said to him. He claimed that ". . . every word ended in -us: lopata [spade] according to him became lopatus; baba [grandmother] - babus."¹² It is amusing that Gogol chose Ukrainian feminine nouns and added the Latin masculine endings.

The father was confused, and the son asked: "Father, how do you call this [rake] in your language?"¹³ While the father struggled to decipher the question, the son stepped on the end of the rake so that the handle flew up and struck the student on the forehead. "That cursed rake!"¹⁴ exclaimed the student in Ukrainian.

Hryhoriy Kvitka disapproved of the use of foreign, incomprehensible language, but he was concerned with the use of the outdated Church Slavic. In The Witch of Konotop, Kvitka points out the ill effects from the use of unintelligible language. Kvitka's gibberish was not macaronic, but a burdensome mass of heavy, complicated language. The author wanted to

12. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 2.

13. Ibid., p. 2.

14. Ibid., p. 2.

demonstrate how unintelligible language could create havoc in the hands of improperly qualified individuals.

A certain Captain Mykyta Ulasovych Zabryokha commanded a Company in the Konotop district. The Adjutant of the Company, Prokip Ryhorovych Pistryak, was a painstaking, obstinate individual who was consumed with jealousy of his Commander. He soon discovered the Company Commander's weaknesses - he was practically illiterate and fond of a leisurely life. The Adjutant also observed that the illiterate Captain loved the sound of elevated or "learned" phraseology because it sounded scholarly.

The Company Orders and correspondence with higher military authorities were composed by the Adjutant. Thanks to the Adjutant's complex language and the ignorance of the Company Commander, the former practically occupied both military posts. The Captain merely signed the Company Orders or documents without asking questions or delving into the contents. Here are some samples of this complex style:

Ta se, dobrodiyu, leport ob sotennim narodochysleniyi, v nalychnosti predstoyashchikh po manoveniyu vashomy . . .¹⁵

. . . mymoshedshuyu sedmytsyu hlumlyakhsya . . .¹⁶

Vozhdelinnoho umoizstupleniya, z dnevnym mistoprebyvaniyem, vam, pane sotnyku, utresuhublyayemo!¹⁷

15. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 158.

16. Ibid., p. 159.

17. Ibid., p. 178.

"Shcho - kazhe - zhelakh sovokupytysya z yiyi dshcheriyu Odariyeyu, duzhe lipoobraznoyu, i vona, tresuhubo nechestyvaya, zamist zhelayemoyi divytsi, vozklonyla u kyshnyu moyu tysyashcheklyaty harbuz i pokry prednyaya moya sramotoyu, yako rubyshchem. Tak se yiy za onoye dilo takovaya pynkhva . . ."¹⁸

"But what is this?" - asked Yosypovych - "Is it verse, or what is it?" "But! I myself do not know the why and wherefore of it,"¹⁹ said Zabryokha, the Captain in command.

Kvitka deliberately inserted this conversation to make his objective plainer.

Gogol introduced Latinisms in his works as a form of humorous relief, and there is no evidence that Gogol used Latinisms for any reason other than to be funny.

We find humor in Kvitka's works with no other purpose than to cheer the reader. The author's complex and heavy Church Slavic, however, did not exactly have a humorous purpose. The Captain did not understand the Orders for which he was held responsible and which he signed. He was very similar to the Ukrainian population who did not understand the archaic Church Slavic, but yet submitted to its use before the vernacular was introduced. The author openly justified his stand with regard to the vernacular, and criticized those who accepted Church Slavic without protests.

The two authors used Latinisms for completely different purposes, but they achieved their means with equal skill.

* * *

18. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 181.

19. Ibid., p. 156.

That's enough, that's enough of your wailing, my dear. A Kozak does not bother much with women. You would tie them up with apron strings and hold them there . . . Move along, move along, and quickly place on the table everything there is. Do not bother with puffs, honeycakes, poppyseed cake and other pastry; bring a whole ram for us, give us a goat, the forty-year-old med. And plenty of brandy without frills, without plum pits or anything fancy, but pure, foamy brandy that would sparkle and hiss like mad.²⁰

This was the Kozak father's way of welcoming his sons home after completing their studies at the Kievan Academy as described by Gogol in Taras Bulba. The mother was happy at their sons' return, but sentimental, while the father wanted to initiate his sons into the hard life stripped of all frills that awaited them in the Kozak camp. Plenty of strenuous exercise in battle and substantial meals topped with med awaited the sons.

There is no specific evidence to indicate how and when alcoholic beverages were introduced into the Ukraine. It is recorded, however, that the Ukrainians made many advances in their husbandry including bee-keeping. As well as being commercially produced, honey was used for home consumption and for making an alcoholic beverage called med. By the tenth century intoxicating drinks made from honey are mentioned.

In the third [story] dealing with the revenge over the Derevlyany, Princess Olha prepared a funeral feast in commemoration of the dead at the grave of her husband, and when the Derevlyany got drunk on med, she ordered her soldiers to kill them.²¹

20. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 107.

21. Mykhaylo Hrushevs'ky, Ilyustrovana istoriya Ukrayiny (Vienna: Dniprosoyuz, 1921), p. 66.

The scanty information does not state to what extent med was used or what classes of people were privileged to use it. It seems that the use of med was quite universal, for we find mentions of "many colonies of bees in the apiary"²² even in old Christmas carols. It was customary for the carollers to express their best wishes to the master, the mistress and the children in the house when they had sung their carols. Among other things, they often wished their hosts an abundance of bee-swarms.

It is not till the advent of the Kozak period and secular literature that we find a more general use of med as an alcoholic beverage. Gogol's memorable Taras Bulba describes the Kozak rest period in between battles, and med is mentioned here. Kotlyarevsky, Hrebinka, Chaykovsky, and a host of other writers who deal with the Kozak period substantiate Gogol's references to med.

Drinking was not only used by the Kozaks during their leisure time, or as a means of celebrating a victory. Socially, we find that the custom of drinking had entered the cycle of celebrations connected with the calendar year. During a Christmas Eve supper, for example, the whole family sampled a drink, including the little children.²³ This act was not considered drinking; it was a sampling of their domestic product.

22. Mykhaylo Hrushevs'ky, Istoriya ukrayins'koyi literatury (New York: Knyho-spilka, 1959), Vol. I, p. 204.

23. S. Kylymnyk, Ukrayins'ky rik u narodnikh zvychayakh v istorychnomu osvittleni (Winnipeg: The Trident Press, 1955), Vol. I, p. 30.

Drinking to people's health was also common. During the wedding ceremonies there are many instances which demand a toast. This can be seen in Kvitka's Marusya. In the Eve of St. John, Gogol mentioned that the ancient customs "were not to be compared to the present ones,"²⁴ hinting that the ancient procedures were more leisurely and ceremonious.

In Sorochyntsi Market, Solopiy Cherevyk went to a market, met Holopupenko, and admired the young man for his ability to consume liquor without making a wry face.

"Well, dear, I have found a suitor for our daughter!" Solopiy triumphantly announced the news to his wife.

" . . . Fool, fool! . . . Where have you seen or heard of a respectable man chasing after suitors . . . I think he is the most ragged of all scoundrels!"²⁵

Solopiy tried to argue his point, but his wife interjected: "If he is a drunkard and a vagabond, then he is your type."²⁶

It is significant that the mother's indignation reflected the average Ukrainian mother's antipathy against admitting drunkards into the family. Solopiy only saw the immediate present while his wife reasoned and looked into the future. She visualized the possible ill results of drinking. It is

24. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 19.

25. Ibid., p. 7.

26. Ibid., p. 7.

worth noting that all the Ukrainians tolerated social drinking, but they dreaded and disliked habitual drunkards. Even the moralist Kvitka tolerated social drinking.²⁷ But anyone who exceeded this placed his property and home life in danger.

The presence of a chumak at the market in Lypka, in the Soldier's Portrait, was natural and logical. Kvitka realized that the long, monotonous journey followed by his sudden arrival at the market, was bound to have an exciting effect on him. The chumak, like the sailor who spends weeks on end on the high seas, actually behaved like a present day sailor on shore. In describing the chumak, Kvitka evidently realized that his drunkenness was a psychological compensation for lost time during his long journey. This scene was presented frankly by Kvitka without drawing any moral conclusions.

Kvitka's Dead Men's Easter is devoted to drunkenness, a frightful story with much emphasis on Nychypor, the drunkard. Because of his drinking habits, Nychypor disregarded his moral life completely. During lent Nychypor virtually defiled his soul. Kvitka's objective was to point out the harm of over-indulgence on domestic and family life. In doing this he also showed a masterly knowledge of Ukrainian customs.

The Witch of Konotop was another story in which Kvitka showed his disapproval of excessive drinking. Its results were illustrated by Captain Zabryokha. "Even though the fellow [the Captain] was refined, here, on

27. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 123.

a Holy Sunday, he did not even put on a clean shirt and . . . did not take off his blue silken trousers . . . he even slept in them . . ."28 The author described the Captain's appearance in most depressing colors and he added a similar description of his surroundings: ". . . At the edge of the table beside him were his pipe and purse, his inkwell, a comb and a full quart of last year's brandy . . ."29 One might conclude that the author introduced the story with a gloomy description on purpose. The Captain's drunkenness resulted in very unpleasant consequences.

Both Gogol and Kvitka mention the mohorych in their market scenes. In Gogol's Sorochyntsi Market, the newly-chosen son-in-law was required to stand a mohorych for his future father-in-law. In Kvitka's Soldier's Portrait the question of a mohorych followed the conclusion of a bargain.

The word mohorych is not a Ukrainian word; it is probably of Asiatic origin.³⁰ It is a bargain drink, a way of demonstrating that both contracting parties are thoroughly satisfied with the deal. The seller was expected to furnish the mohorych for the purchaser as a token of mutual satisfaction. This applied to all sales: household goods, implements, stock, grain - everything that could be acquired at the market in Kvitka and Gogol's time. It was also used to cement such agreements as that

28. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 152.

29. Ibid., p. 152.

30. A. G. Preobrazhensky, Etimologicheskyy slovar' russkogo yazyka (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo inostrannykh i natsional'nykh slovarey, 1959), p. 543.

between Cherevyk and Holopupenko.

In addition to Gogol's knowledge of Ukrainian customs, beliefs and folklore, the author was well acquainted with Ukrainian literature after the introduction of the vernacular. One can see that Holopupenko, a drinking type in Sorochyntsi Market has a prototype in Aeneas, taken from Kotlyarevsky's Eneida. Gogol adopted some epigrams too from the Eneida. Gogol assimilated individual passages, and even paraphrased the original excerpts. Here is an example: "Kak molodetski tyanet pyennuyu . . ."³¹ (how valiantly he drinks liquor), found in Gogol and a similar expression in Sorochyntsi Market: "A kak syvukhu vazhno duyet"³² (how he assumes an important air while drinking). Gogol also took from Kotlyarevsky the expression: "Syvukhu tak mov brahu khlyshche"³³ (he greedily gulps the liquor as if it were mash). "Syvukha" and "pyennaya" in Kotlyarevsky and Gogol respectively are figurative expressions for intoxicating drinks. Gogol's phraseology has a definite affinity to Kotlyarevsky's expressions in the Eneida where drinking is involved.

Gogol's description of drinking is presented in a light-hearted, realistic manner. To the author, drinking was one of the details of the story, a replica of the daily life of certain characters in his works. Apart from presenting specific scenes involving drinking, the author had no other

31. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 6.

32. Ibid., p. 7.

33. Cited in Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 6.

underlying motive. Gogol's main interest was to present to the reader the reality of Ukrainian life as he saw it, or what seemed to him to be actual life. People consumed alcoholic beverages in Gogol's time, and he treated it as if he were one of the spectators.

Wherever there was opposition to drinking, as in the case of Solopiy's wife, Gogol presents it very naturally. One does not feel that Gogol himself is criticizing drinking.

Kvitka's market scene portrays a chumak who had overindulged, acted barbarously and was willing to treat anyone who wished to take advantage of his generosity. The author inserted the scene for the reader's amusement. Kvitka's drunken chumak at the market place was presented with vivid reality, and the writer left the reader to draw his own conclusion.

Drinking is also found in Kvitka's Marusya. The author mentions drinking when the matchmakers enter the house. The description of the wedding also includes drinking at appropriate moments during the ceremony. In both the places mentioned, had the author avoided the serving of drinks, his works would have appeared unreal. Since both Gogol and Kvitka relied on popular customs, the reader would have noticed the omission.

In other works Kvitka purposely emphasized the use of intoxicating beverages, and he stressed the detriment arising from excessive use of alcohol. Because the author wanted to give a message to the reader, he even omitted the use of liquor in instances where the custom of the day would have permitted it in the most respectable families and society. He

wanted to impress the reader that casual drinking was a prelude to habitual drinking, and that habitual drinking was the final step in the moral and physical corruption of the individual, and in the destruction of family life. Kvitka did not mince matters in showing the fruits of debauchery.

While Kvitka idealized Marusya and Vasyl excessively, his didacticism is equally prominent in his drinking and drunken scenes. The lesson is undisguised as, for example, in his concluding remarks: "Khoma, ot tobi i skarb" (Khoma, so that is what you call fortune). It is a sarcastic remark, but it makes a strong, moralizing appeal to the reader to beware of evil effects. Some of his other conclusions are more blunt: "This is what liquor leads to . . . It is permissible to drink, but not to overindulge: One or two in company, but not like Nychypor . . . Take care of yourselves, boys; do not indulge in drinking."³⁴

The general impression of the stories which include drinking in Kvitka's works show a close likeness to the sermon of the last judgment. Kvitka strongly suggests that habitual drinkers, and even those who cannot stop at "one or two in company," will join Khoma and Nychypor and their type, on the left side of the Father on judgment day.

While Kvitka condemned irresponsible and selfish people, he praised the virtuous. He also pointed out the physical and moral rewards for the righteous.

34. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 120.

Kvitka and Gogol presented drinking and drinking scenes in their works to suit their own particular stories. Both authors wanted to create particular effects. Although their manner of treating drinking scenes and drunkenness was far from identical; they succeeded very well in their respective aims.

The drinking and drunkenness do not impress the reader as being overdone, abused or presented in an unnatural way. Gogol and Kvitka base their descriptions on examples from the daily life of their time, and these fit very neatly into the general framework of their works. The scenes in both authors are very true to the life of their time.

CHAPTER V

SUPERNATURAL LIFE IN GOGOL AND KVITKA

Much of the folklore about supernatural life¹ in the works of Gogol and Kvitka originated in the pagan dawn of Ukrainian history, but in the process of centuries of development, the old beliefs assumed some conformity with Christianity. Throughout the works of both authors where devils, witches, vampires, nymphs, fairies, the fantastic and the incredible are portrayed, there is a feeling that Gogol and Kvitka consciously or unconsciously stressed the idea of two opposing forces clamoring to influence man's life. Under the stress of the two opposing forces - good and evil - the individual with strong will-power and clearly-defined objectives who tries to decipher the mysteries of life and its ultimate aim in the light of Christian teaching, or at the least who respects the ethical code of society, emerges victorious, and sides with the forces of good.

Both authors often describe crowd scenes, for example, at the market place. In Kvitka's The Witch of Konotop and the Dead Men's Easter, and in Gogol's Christmas Eve and The Lost Document, both authors describe crowds, but it is only certain individuals who became victims of the influence of evil spirits. The balance of the population are God-fearing and law-abiding citizens; they depend on Almighty God for

1. By supernatural life we understand hypothetical, incorporeal, imaginary forces; ghosts, apparitions, witches, devils, souls of the deceased, etc. Henceforth, "supernatural" and "supernatural life: will be used in this sense.

guidance, and rely on their native wit and the sweat of their brow for their subsistence.

In order to heighten his description of the adverse effects of evil spirits on his characters, Gogol gives some brief portraits of the devil. Although Kvitka stressed and pointed out the harmful effects of submitting oneself to the will of evil beings, there does not appear to be any deliberate intention on his part to describe the physical features of the devil. Both authors assumed that the old superstitions were well-known to the population of their time, and so the slightest mention or hint about any detail of the supernatural world would conjure up a complete picture in the reader's mind. The supernatural was as familiar in those days as cars and radios are in ours.

Very little is known of the pre-Christian deities, rites and beliefs of the early Ukrainians, but there is some evidence that they venerated some of the gods for their usefulness in life. "Each of these gods was called boh, which means 'good' or 'weal.'"² Among the life-giving powers which were highly regarded by the early Ukrainians were the god of the sun, Svaroh, the god of fire, and others:

To the sun they gave the name of Khors and Dazhd', meaning "the giver of all good" . . . To fire was given the name of Svarozhych, the son of the great god Svaroh, god of Heavenly light and of fire, sun and lightning. . . To the senior gods belonged also Veles or Volos,

2. M. Hrushevs'ky, A Story of Ukraine, O. F. Frederiksen, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 29.

the "god of cattle" and protector of animals.³

These were recognized, venerated and praised for their contribution to daily life.

As well as worshipping the life-giving forces, they were afraid of any inexplicable phenomena, such as thunder - "to this menacing power of thunder, which rumbles and flashes during a storm, they gave the name of Perun."⁴ The flashing lightning, followed by the rumbling of thunder, was construed as a threat or an imminent punishment for man's misdemeanors. The deliberate or unconscious emphasis on the two opposing forces striving to gain the allegiance of man which we see in the works of Gogol and Kvitka, is strongly imbedded in Ukrainian folklore.

Popular beliefs, manners and customs of the pre-Christian period were modified to coincide with the Christian teaching. The concrete representation of evil in the pre-Christian era was replaced by an abstract concept of evil in the Christian period. With the advent of Christianity, the evil spirits of the olden days were replaced by Satan and his associates. It is logical to assume that the early believers wholeheartedly accepted the new Christian teachings, yet they were not able to grow out of their old, pagan background in their lifetime.

3. Hrushevs'ky, A Story of Ukraine, O. F. Frederiksen, ed., p. 29.

4. Ibid., p. 29.

Following His baptism, our Lord, Jesus Christ, went into the wilderness and spent forty days and nights in prayer and fasting while He was preparing to announce the new teaching to the people. Towards the end of the period He was tempted by the devil.⁵ The evil spirit was presented to the early Christians in an abstract form. The early Christians accepted the Great Teacher, and, alongside the concrete Saviour, Christ, they visualized a concrete tempter, the devil.⁶ When the Ukrainians accepted Christianity, they gave the old evil spirit a new character, a new name, and a new appearance. The idea of the devil as a physical being was strengthened in the minds by secondary theories which flourished among the southern Slavs. Other early oral and written legends which originated among the Hebrews helped to confirm their belief in the visible and tangible devil.⁷ Gogol and Kvitka did not question the authenticity of the demon's existence or his supposed appearance; they accepted the popular version of him and used it in their works. The Church, incidentally, branded the old Hebrew stories and the Slavonic legends upon which this concept was based as heresy.

The pictorial concept of the devil reached vast proportions in the eleventh century. As a result a dualist faith called Bogomilism evolved in the southern Slav regions.⁸ Even the Primary Kievan Chronicle of 1071

5. Matthew IV: I-14; Luke IV: I-13.

6. N. K. Gudziy, Istoriya drevney russkoy literatury (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe uchebno-pedagogicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1945), p. 35.

7. Ibid., p. 34.

8. Ibid., p. 35.

recorded that man was created by two opposing forces: the devil created man's body, and God breathed a soul into it; the good qualities in every human being are attributed to God, the evil ones to the devil; when man dies, his body is returned to earth as dust to dust, and his soul goes to God. The pictorial concept created some incredibly fantastic theories, such as the following:

God washed Himself in a bath, and after perspiring, He dried Himself with straw and threw it out of heaven upon the earth. Then Satan quarrelled with God as to which of them should create man out of it. But the devil made man, and God breathed a soul into him. As a result, whenever man dies, his body goes to the earth, and his soul to God.⁹

Bogomilism is an example of the way early Christians accepted current rumors at their face value; they were unable to discern the abstract from the concrete, the spiritual from the physical.

Here are sprinklings of descriptions of the demon in Gogol's

Sorochyntsi Market:

"Did you hear what the people said?" the man with a lump on his forehead continued, directing his large eyes on him with a sidelong glance.

"Well! "

". . . The assessor . . . assigned a cursed place for the market on which, try as you may, one cannot let off a single grain. Do you see that shed, the tumbled down shack, that stands away up under the hill? . . . The fact is that in that shack devilish pranks are conducted, and not one market passes without a misfortune. Yesterday the volost secretary . . . looked at the dormer window

9. Gudziy, Istoriya drevney russkoy literatury, p. 35.

a hog's snout appeared there . . . ¹⁰

In the same works we also find this:

"Once they drove only one devil out of hell for such a crime, but I really forget what it was . . ."

"Now, kum!" Cherevyk interrupted: "How could this ever happen that they would drive a devil out of hell?"

"What could be done, kum, they just chased him out like the peasant chases a dog out of the house. Perhaps bliss to do something good overcame him, and they showed him the door. Well, life out of hell was so very tedious that he was ready to hang himself. What should he do? He began to drown his grief in drinking. He settled in that very same tumbled down shack which you saw under the hill . . . The devil became such a reveller whose equal you could not even find among young men. It is a fact that he sat in the tavern from morning till night . . .

Here, again, the severe Cherevyk interrupted our narrator.

"No one knows what you are saying, kum! How could anyone admit a devil into a tavern? You see, he has . . . claws on his paws and little horns on his head."

"That is the very reason why he wore a cap and gloves. How could anyone recognize him?"¹¹

In the Eve of St. John Gogol gives additional descriptions of this menacing supernatural being:

On that same farm a man often appeared, or, one should say, a devil in a human shape. Where is he from, why he came, no one knew. He idled, took to drinking, and again would disappear no one knows where, and there is no word of him. And, here again, as if out of the blue, he chases all over the village streets . . . Everyone is overcome with fear when he frowns with his bristly brows . . . And if you take a gift from him, the following night you find some friend from the marsh creeps to

10. N. V. Gogol, Sochineniya (New York: International University Press, n.d.), p. 6.

11. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

visit you, with horns on his head, and starts to choke you by the neck, if there is a necklace; to bite a finger if there is a ring on it . . . But the worst trouble is - one cannot get rid of it: if you throw it into the water, the devilish ring or necklace floats on the water toward your hands.¹²

A little further down in the same story Gogol gives another characteristic of the devil:

O, what a character! His hair is bristles; his eyes - like those of an ox . . . Here, with his fiendish smile, he clattered the leather basket hanging from his belt.¹³

In the Lost Document, Gogol continues with other descriptions of the devil:

Disregarding all fears, my grandfather began to laugh when he saw that the devils with canine heads, strange¹⁴ legs, twirling their tails, playing sweet to the witches as if they were young men beside beautiful girls . . . Hog snouts, dog, goat, crane, horse heads - all stretched out, and here they crawl to kiss one another.¹⁵

Gogol gives still another characteristic of the devil in his

Christmas Eve story:

At that time when the nimble dandy with a tail and a goat's head was flying from the chimney and then again into the chimney, his load hanging from the belt at his side, into which he had concealed a stolen moon . . .¹⁶

In the meantime, the devil indulged in Solokha's caresses: He kissed her hand with such grimaces . . .¹⁷

12. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 16.

13. Ibid., p. 18.

14. The original text has the word nyemets (German). It could mean a number of things in this text: foreign, strange, queer. On the other hand, it could mean a well-dressed person from head to toe, whose legs were neat and meticulous in appearance, with well-polished, aristocratic footwear.

15. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 38.

16. Ibid., p. 48.

17. Ibid., p. 49.

This is one of Gogol's descriptions of the devil. The devil was only incidental in the story. The author did not devote a specific passage or a section of the story to describing the devil; his appearance and features have to be pieced together from scattered descriptions.

Kvitka regarded the devil as abominable, loathsome and ugly. Kvitka concentrated more on his action than on his appearance, but his appearance, when Kvitka described it, was fittingly repulsive. Here is a grim description of the devil's work taken from the Dead Men's Easter.

. . . And here, a frog immediately settled in his mouth and began to croak, and then it clung to his tongue and palate so that no force could remove it. And if not only a young married woman, but a girl had been flirting by winking . . . at young men . . . their eyes immediately disappeared, and in their stead, worms swarmed in the hollows . . .¹⁸

Drunkards allegedly were able to see devils in various forms, mostly late at night. In another passage we find:

Another one related how a drunkard was coming home late at night when suddenly from a grove of birch trees a bay mare, scabby and breathing heavily, hobbled towards him . . .¹⁹

Opening his mouth wide, Maslyak stopped, listened and wondered what this could be. And suddenly, an open carriage came up. An old man, either a Muscovite merchant or a Jewish tavern-keeper, one cannot tell, got out of it, and so nimbly. He had a reddish goat's beard; grey, roaming eyes, and long bushy eyebrows stretching like bristles. His nose was long, hooked and pointed at the tip, like a pin. His lips were thin, and the mouth stretched from ear to ear, and when he started talking and opened it, a good-sized head and cap could enter right inside it; the teeth in his

18. H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne Vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1956), Vol. II, p. 113.

19. Ibid., p. 229.

mouth were just like a pig's. His jacket was made of taffeta, wide and long, with cheaper material at the back: it dragged like that of the wife of our confidant while she was a townswoman and wore the dresses, and when her husband suddenly became a courtier she then wore clothes like those of a real noblewoman, with long trailing tail. The sleeves of the jacket were so long that they covered his fingers; locks of hair, like a mouse's tail, dangled from under a very tall cap, angular and tasselled. On his feet he had yellow boots with places for the toes like a glove, and on the heel was also a toe like that of a dog; and through those toe places, claws were showing like those of a cat from beyond the sea.²⁰

. . . Although he had noticed that Yudyn's fingers were long, black, shaggy and crooked, and with extra long curved claws, it made no difference to him . . .²¹

Why is the back of Yudyn's jacket so long, like that of a noblewoman's? Oh, it covered the tail. Why is the cap so tall and angular? He wore it over his horns . . . And finally it became evident that it was a devil, a real, genuine devil! Well then, everyone who has seen a devil says, and we see his picture with a tail, horns, goat's beard, hooked nose, extra-long fingers and curved claws, and here, it was actually so.²²

Kvitka then described how the man, Khoma Maslyak, being tempted by the devil, entered a place which used to be a tavern and an overnight stopping place for travellers. In an Aladdin-like fashion this supernatural being brushed his thigh, and there appeared an abundance of various luxurious and savory dishes. He made a similar motion, and there appeared a variety of liquor. At this point the author asks the reader:

20. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 232.

21. Ibid., p. 234.

22. Ibid., p. 235.

Why could not Maslyak surmise what sort of a Jew it was that he eats sausage and pork? When he eats all this, then he is not a Jew but certainly a devil; a devil because of his horns, his tail, his hands and feet, his name, the sausage and the piglet . . . , a devil and no one else . . . But Maslyak did not recognize him.²³

There are very many more places where Kvitka describes supernatural life and the filth and slime one has to traverse before one reaches the abode of the devils. The above descriptions are sufficient to represent Kvitka's impression of the physical appearance of the devil, his ability to tempt and corrupt the weaker elements of humanity.

One must remember that both Gogol and Kvitka used the devil and his subordinates as he suited their particular types of stories. Scanty references or descriptions were sufficient for Gogol, but Kvitka needed frequent allusions in some of his stories and inserted lengthier descriptions in his works to bring out the necessary effects.

It might be interesting to compare Gogol and Kvitka's descriptions of supernatural life with the findings of scholars in the field of Ukrainian folklore. Neither our authors nor the common people showed any interest in the ancestry or origin of devils. The existence of evil, as of good, was assumed to have started with the Creation. But the fact that devils had existed for so many centuries and carried on their work of corruption among humanity puzzled the common folk. A theory even arose as to how the devil population is perpetuated:

23. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 236.

Devils proceed one from another. They are like humans; they have horns, get married, only they do not die. Some of the people chanced to be present at the wedding of a devil.²⁴

It seemed that the whole world was divided into a number of geographic regions, and the devils only ruled and occupied their own particular region. This came as a result of their conspiracy to equal God. They built a large and tall building, then gathered together to rejoice, "but God moved the building and the devils kept flying down for forty days and forty nights."²⁵ There were five separate dominions assigned to the devils according to this belief: water, forest, marshes, fertile prairie lands and marshlands.²⁶

An impartial compiler of folklore gathered the following information from the common people:

People present the devil as being of medium height and dark complexion. He has dog's or chicken's feet, a short tail, a wide snout and a long nose, and eyes like red-hot coals. His hair is black, long and stiff; his hands are long with long claws; his horns are like a ram or a deer's; he wears strange²⁷ clothing; and has a high hat.

Those who have seen the devils notice horns on their heads elaborately concealed by a round hat with a wide brim, a dog's head, a hooked tail and claws on hands and feet. They wear short, narrow trousers. A devil likes to assume the appearance of a lost kid . . .²⁸

24. V. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol: ego zhizn' i sochineniya (Moscow: H. Lesner i D. Sobko, 1905), p. 129.

25. Ibid., p. 129.

26. Ibid., p. 129.

27. Cf. footnote #14.

28. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol . . . , p. 130.

Like human beings, devils have their place of abode, and here is what the common beliefs maintain:

They say that devils always live in vacant, old, half-ruined buildings, and there they whistle by night. Devils grind snuff in partly ruined, disused mills. The places where devils lure man appear so beautiful that, as they say, they dazzle the eyes: there are servants for the guests . . . Once the cock crows, all is over . . . Coming to his senses the victim makes the sign of the cross and spits in different directions; but somewhere in the corner a little devil is hidden in a round straw hat, dressed in a frock beneath which one can see a dog's tail, grinning and roaring with devilish laughter. He who spends the night in the devil's marsh almost always becomes ill.²⁹

Devils are not the only supernatural beings mentioned in the works of Gogol and Kvitka. The second in rank as compared to the devil are the witches. In May Night, Gogol speaks of this being in this manner:

She [Hanna] became sad; she began to cry. She looked: a frightful black cat is creeping toward her, her fur aflame, and the iron claws clang on the floor. In fright she jumped on the bench: the cat followed her. She jumped over the stove-bench, the cat followed her here and again threw herself at her neck and began to choke her. Having torn the cat away from her, she shrieked and threw it on the floor; again the frightful cat began creeping up. Anxiety seized her. Her father's sword hung on the wall. She snatched it and slammed it on the floor. The paw with iron claws fell to the side, and the cat disappeared in the dark corner, meowing. The young wife did not come out of her room the whole day long. On the third day she came out with a bandaged arm. The poor girl guessed that her step-mother was a witch and that she had cut her [step-mother's] arm.³⁰

29. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol . . . , p. 131.

30. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 24.

Further on in the same work Gogol again mentioned witches:

I will present you with a belt studded with pearls. I have gold . . . Young man, find my step-mother for me! She is a dreadful witch: She does not leave me in peace in this bright world. She torments me; she set me to work . . .³¹

In The Lost Document Gogol also mentioned witches in another sense:

Gypsies live in the bush and come out of their lair to hammer out the iron in such a night as this, when only witches ride their pokers.³²

Gogol also mentions witches in his Eve of St. John. Here they are seen at another task: sucking blood.

A devilish laughter thundered from every side. Ugly monsters galore jumped up before him. A witch, clinging to a decapitated corpse with her hands, was sucking blood from it like a wolf. . . .³³

Kvitka mentions similar instances of witches in his works. He gives yet more details of their activities, especially in The Witch of Konotop:

. . . Yavdokha Zubykha is an old, old, an extremely old woman. But old men . . . say that, when they were growing into manhood, she was then as old as she is today . . . People say she was old during the day, but as soon as the sun began to set, she began to grow young; and at midnight she became a young girl . . . When she becomes young and dresses up in a white blouse and lets her hair down like a girl, then she goes throughout the village to milk cows, sheep, goats, mares, bitches, cats, and frogs, lizards and snakes in the marshes . . .³⁴

31. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 32.

32. Ibid., p. 37.

33. Ibid., p. 19.

34. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 176.

"And where is the witch? They have immersed all of them, and each of them sinks, and the witch is nowhere to be found?"³⁵

. . . Yavdokha Zubykha hit the water as if it were a board, and she did not sink; she remained on top of the water like a fish, and splashed with hands and feet bound . . .³⁶

"Here is the witch, yes, yes," they all shouted.³⁷

The braver ones tied a pile of stones unto a rope . . . and three men could hardly lift the pile, and placed it on the neck of Yavdokha Zubykha, and thought she would sink. But the wretched woman floated on the surface of the water . . .³⁸

These samples selected at random from the works of Gogol and Kvitka illustrate the main characteristics and some of the functions of these creatures. One cannot expect a precise description from Gogol and Kvitka, since this would have prevented them from producing the effects they desired in their stories.

For a detailed description of a typical witch, we must once more turn to the compiled folklore material.

Here is a description of an old witch: an old woman, generally an aged one, tall, thin, gaunt, bony, somewhat hump-backed, her hair tousled or hanging out under her shawl, with large yellow or gray eyes with an angry expression, and crooked glances under frowning eyebrows, though sometimes, she looks straight into another person's eyes . . . she is wide-mouthed, thin-lipped, with a protruding double chin, and has long hands. At night when the whole family is asleep, the witch sits on the shovel used to put bread in the oven, and flies out of the chimney . . . It is well

35. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 182.

36. Ibid., p. 183.

37. Ibid., p. 185.

38. Ibid., p. 183.

known that all witches and devils try to reach home by cock-crow . . . otherwise they cannot reach [the witches'] sabbath the following night . . .

They say that a witch . . . removes her shirt, covers her body with some kind of ointment, then she places a pot in the oven with some kind of fluid, warms it up, and when the fluid begins to steam, then the witch snatches a shovel or a broom, sits on it as if it were a horse, and flies out with the vapor into the chimney. At this time a witch . . . can turn into a dog, a cat or a bird, and fly sky-high . . . Witches can remove stars from the sky and hide them in their homes or . . . they can sweep the stars in their flight, which is why we sometimes see a mass of flying stars.

. . . Witches suffer greatly at the approach of their death. In order to see why a witch suffers greatly before her death, one must take a [horse's collar,] stand at the threshold of the house and look through the collar at her as she is dying, and you will see that she is surrounded on all sides by demons.³⁹

There are certain specific functions attributed to witches. Here are some of them:

Witches, according to popular belief, milk other people's cows by night, stripping them until they bleed, and in doing this they spoil them; they scare people by turning themselves into various beings: dogs, pigs, magpies and other, inanimate, articles . . .

Witches, like vampires, suck human blood, and especially that of young men and young ladies thereby causing their death.⁴⁰

In some cases it had to be proved that a person was a witch, according to the popular belief. This was the method of proof: "Women . . . do not sink in water even though their hands and feet may be bound."⁴¹

39. Pokrovsky, ed., Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol . . . , pp. 119-120.

40. Ibid., p. 123.

41. Ibid., P. 129.

There is another general description in another collection of folklore. Here the author does not delve into minute details, but deals with certain facets of supernatural life in broad terms:

In the first place, a witch has a tail; it is the main trait by which she can be recognized. Unfortunately it is fairly difficult to detect this trait . . .

Witches wear long shirts and let down their hair; they milk cows until they bleed; they can turn into a cloud, a cat, or countless different fantastic forms. I remember my uncle telling me when I was a child how he met a witch. He had taken a horse from the master's stable . . . and saw a sea before him . . . He realized immediately that a witch had made a flood of water . . .⁴²

The main gathering place is in Kiev, on Lysa hora, on the eve of St. John. They fly there from the whole of the Ukraine through their chimneys on brooms, forks, or curved pieces of wood, but before they fly off, they rub themselves . . . with a decoction of witch grass, especially terlych.⁴³

Gogol and Kvitka obtained their folk material from the start by listening to popular talk. During the centuries folklore has changed; fresh experience and materials were incorporated in it. It is very difficult to determine what percentage of the population actually believed in the oral traditions. If the works of Gogol and Kvitka could be considered a criterion of the extent of popular belief in the supernatural, one would conclude that the percentage is negligible. Gogol seems to preserve an author's impartiality in this respect; he presents certain features of demonology in a matter-of-fact manner, and leaves the reader to judge for himself. In all probability Gogol's indifference reflects the people's attitude regarding the existence of the supernatural.

42. M. Markevich, Obychai, poveriya, kukhnya i napitki malorossiyan (Kiev: I. Davidenko, 1860), p. 83.

43. Ibid., p. 84.

While Gogol describes the frightening example of the supernatural in a natural style, Kvitka approaches the question from a moral angle. Characters like Khoma and Nychypor did not receive any sympathy from their acquaintances. The people only pitied the physical injuries sustained by individuals who succumbed to the devil's temptations; the sight of an individual in a tattered and bruised condition evoked the sympathy of the spectators, but they condemned the motives that had caused his sorry physical state. Such an individual was shunned by respectable people, and considered as a social outcast.

Supernaturalism, as presented by Gogol and Kvitka, was not retained in folklore for sentimental purposes or historical reasons. These fantastic tales were kept alive by individuals who had an inexplicable sense of fear, and lacked better judgment. Practical jokes or even coincidences often alarmed them and awakened their imagination. Here is an example of how the belief in the supernatural could be kept alive in the populace:

On December 7, 1848, a parish priest came to me and asked me to investigate who kept disturbing the village magistrate's grave. He had died from cholera in September . . . I gave an order to detail secretly a sufficient number of guards and to capture the prankster who was worrying the village. Either because the news of the order had leaked out, or because of the fifteen degree weather, the disturbing of the grave had ceased. But everyone in the village began to say that the deceased was visiting his wife, making a noise, knocking, tearing at the roof, and tormenting the cattle and horses . . .⁴⁴

44. Markevich, Obychai, poveriya . . . , p. 84.

Both authors used demonology in their works, and both based their description of the physical appearance and behavior of the devils on the numerous oral stories which were circulating in their time. They are consistent in their descriptions even though one sometimes mentioned details that are absent in the other. Gogol describes the devil as anything between a nuisance and a comic turn; he presents him as the common people had pictured him in their tales. Although the devil and his work are manifest in his writings, Gogol does not use supernatural life to point out a moral lesson. He does not try to influence the reader's attitude about the devil's activities.

Kvitka was more dogmatic about the role of the devil. The author pointed out that the evil spirits came to tempt mortals, to mislead them, to arouse hatred, jealousy and envy. He also pointed out that once the devil gained control over a human being, he was destined to a moral decline. All efforts to acquire wealth by listening to the devil's advice proved fruitless and the individual was left in a confused and hopeless state. Yet he never shows an example of repentance.

Gogol's descriptions of the devils and witches are very brief and closely woven into his stories. In addition to devils and the witches, Kvitka named many other minor evil figures which exist in Ukrainian demonology. When they are analyzed, Gogol's devils and witches have a striking resemblance to Kvitka's both in appearance and behavior. This is not surprising since both authors derived their information from the folklore of their time.

Apart from this point it should be mentioned that Ukrainian folklore has not lost its original sense of good and evil, the concept of two separate and opposing powers striving to gain control of man's body and soul.

Basically, the two authors are in full agreement on the existence and activity of the supernatural. In Gogol's works the supernatural was used to adorn the fabric of his stories. The author presented demonology as an element of folklore without emphasizing that evil breeds evil. His attitude was founded on the oral traditions of the populace.

Hryhoriy Kvitka used demonology as an effective means of illustrating that man's righteousness begins with upright behavior, whether in riches or poverty, in the upper classes or the peasantry. For Kvitka, evil forces dominated those who were weak spiritually and mentally; they also tried to undermine strong-willed characters. Kvitka used demonology to put his readers on their guard against the temptations of the evil spirits.

CHAPTER VI

STRUCTURE OF THEIR WORKS

The structure of Gogol's works is adapted to suit the theme of his stories; it varies with the variation of his mood. His structure ranges from one of intensive action, as in Sorochyntsi Market, to the haphazard, carefree type that is found in Ivan Ivanovich and Ivan Nikiforovich. Whether the reader finds himself in the midst of Gogol's rural scenes, the market, on the eve of St. John with its supernatural elements, accompanying Vakula on his hurried trip to Petersburg on Christmas Eve, or among the daring Kozaks, there is very little time for relaxation. The author's creative mind demands constant alertness from the reader to keep pace with the swiftly moving incidents. The scenes or incidents, however trivial and irrelevant they may seem at the time, eventually find their place in the general pattern as the story progresses.

Gogol's plots are not straightforward or predictable; they are complex. Apart from the main story, the secondary stories contribute for their part to the overall effects. His stories are like those of a professional narrator of the seventeenth century in that the dramatic effects take precedence over the plot and proportions. Gogol sees the contemporary scene as a development of an old pattern. "Well over a hundred years ago, my late grandfather said, no one would have recognized our village."¹ Since Gogol correlates the past and the present, his plot is

1. N. V. Gogol, Sochineniya (New York: International University Press, n. d.), p. 16.

complex; his stories sound like an old man's tale of bygone days.

The early part of Gogol's work, Evening on a Farm near Dikanka, is supposedly a narrative told by a bee-keeper, Rudy Panko. It was part of Gogol's technique to hide behind this presumably experienced narrator. A similar device is employed in the Eve of St. John where the dyak of a certain church is presumably the narrator.

The fact is that in the Ukraine a dyak [the leader of responses at church services] had to perform not only church duties but also the function of an interesting story-teller. Before he was selected, the dyak had to demonstrate his ability to narrate interesting stories. For this reason in both Kvitka and Gogol, in numerous cases dyaks occupy the role of narrator.²

The Lost Document is also told by a dyak. In the second part of the Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka, the bee-keeper, Rudy Panko, makes his appearance very graciously to tell another story, while the Bewitched Spot is again narrated by the dyak. This technique gave Gogol an opportunity to express himself as if the narrative had actually happened in bygone days. By the time he reached his historical novel, Taras Bulba, Gogol no longer needed a screen to hide behind while describing the daring wars of the Kozaks.

The use of a narrator in Gogol's works enabled him to introduce all sorts of complex situations without any reflection on himself. Gogol demonstrates such a precise knowledge of the past that the reader can almost visualize a village audience listening spellbound to the local story-teller.

2. Dmytro Chaly, H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko: tvorchist' (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn' oyi literatury, 1962), pp. 118-119.

My beloved reader . . . on our farm it is customary that as soon as work is completed in the field, the peasant climbs onto his earthen stove to relax for the winter, and our fellow-countryman takes his bees into a dark cellar; when there are no cranes in the sky, and you cannot see any pears on the trees, then, as soon as evening comes, somewhere at the end of the street a small fire is sure to crackle, laughter and songs are heard from a distance, a balalayka strums, and sometimes you hear a violin, chatter, and noise . . . It is our vechernytsi [evening entertainment] . . . It is like your balls, but one must say not in every respect. When you attend a ball, it is expressly to wiggle your feet and to yawn into your hand; but in our country a group of girls gathers at one home not exactly for a ball, with spindles, and hatchels; and at the beginning they are supposed to be at work: the spindles murmur, the songs flow . . . but as soon as the young men come unaware into the house with a violinist . . .

But it is best of all when they huddle together tightly and begin to ask riddles or simply to chinwag. O, my God! What don't they narrate! Whence do they unearth antiquity! How they can make shivers creep up your spine! ³

Gogol made his Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka resemble the vechornytsi, or evening parties with music, dancing and story-telling, including frightful stories involving supernatural life. In the guise of a professional village narrator Gogol makes his work appear as folk stories retold at the vechornytsi. It seems as if the experienced narrator's stories had been recorded verbatim by an equally talented narrator.

The author of the Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka does not appear in person in the stories. Even when he shifts to the first person: "I say," the reader visualizes Rudy Panko or the dyak, but never the author himself. "Why the laymen called me Rudy Panko - I really cannot say. It

3. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 1.

seems that my hair is more gray than reddish."⁴ Gogol succeeded in keeping himself totally out of the reader's sight; the author seems to have been a patient listener.

Gogol's fantastic stories have strong touches of reality owing to the author's skill in utilizing the narrator. Gogol did not describe the village in detail, or say much about the personalities in his story, for there was no necessity. A local narrator, who knew the people thoroughly, as well as the village itself, was relating the story to the local people, who were equally well acquainted with the inhabitants and the circumstances of the village. "On that very farm . . ." - the story-teller could have pointed his finger, and the listeners would have known which one he meant.

In Sorochyntsi Market, Gogol also employed the graphic style to make his story sound very real. "Do you see that shed, that tumbled-down shack, that stands away up under the hill?"⁵ Need the narrator be more specific in his descriptions to the local people? One could assume that the story-teller had stretched out his hand in the direction of the "tumbled-down shack that stands away up under the hill."

To heighten the reality of his stories Gogol introduces real story-tellers like Rudy Panko or the dyak. It may have been the dyak from the local church or the church in the neighboring village. The audience might

4. Gogol, Sochineniya, pp. 1-2.

5. Ibid., p. 6.

have known the narrator or the church, and they would undoubtedly know the name of the village. This is another aspect which makes Gogol's work seem real and true to life.

Beside using real place names such as Sorochyntsi, Myrhorod and Hadyach, or the river Pslo, Gogol speaks of "my grandfather" and "my aunt." The bare mention of "my grandfather" did not seem sufficiently convincing to the author. In the Eve of St. John, Gogol stresses the reality of his story still further. "But the main point in grandfather's narratives is the fact that he never lied in his life, and whatever he used to say really had happened."⁶ In the Lost Document Gogol begins the story with a question: "So you want me to tell you more about my grandfather?"⁷ The Hetman, promptly "called my grandfather before him and told him . . ."⁸ We do not know the name of the Hetman, but the reader gets the impression that the author is telling a true story.

It is very likely that Gogol resorted unconsciously to hiding himself behind some elderly narrator, not so much to conceal himself, as to disguise his youthfulness. This literary device added authenticity to fantastic stories of supernatural life in his early works. The folk stories were clearly associated with a definite locality or even with "that tumbled-down shack." The narrator whose hair was "more gray than reddish"

6. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 15.

7. Ibid., p. 35.

8. Ibid., p. 35.

dispelled any suggestion of a youthful author. It gave his work a certain gravity which would not necessarily be associated with a winter entertainment in the Ukraine.

The dyak's narrative about "my grandfather," and the appearance of "my aunt" to assist the author add an intimate and personal touch to Gogol's stories. This intriguing method brings the plot of the story almost to the reader's doorstep. The bare mention of folklore gives him the illusion of being well acquainted with the story, so no further explanation is needed. Allusions to a "hog's snout" or a "red jacket" are further indications of his ingenious use of a narrator.

Hryhoriy Kvitka was a much older man than Nikolai Gogol when he began to write in Ukrainian. His practical experience and maturity reflected themselves in the plots of his stories. Kvitka, the moralist and lay preacher, had a definite message to convey to his public, and he employed an appropriate plan to convey it. His plots are straightforward, and when one has read three or four stories, one can almost deduce the theme and conclusion from his opening tone and style.

Two distinct ideas are contrasted through the story Ot tobi i skarb. One is that of people seeking spiritual wealth and righteousness during the Holy Week, and the other is represented by the villain Khoma, who sought material and earthly treasures. The search for wealth is common to both parties, but their sense of values differs greatly. The moral of Kvitka's story comes out very emphatically. Kvitka, the idealist, portrays the happiness and contentedness of the religious majority who endeavors to

strengthen their virtue and character in the sight of God, and are sharing their happiness on Easter morning when they hear Khoma's cries, and find him in a tattered condition. The contrast is very effective. It suggests in a moving fashion that Khoma has lost his original Ukrainian sense of value, and surrendered to the temptation of the pagan forces which promised Khoma a life of leisure and drunkenness without applying himself to his daily duties.

A similar contrast of thought is expressed in Kvitka's Dead Men's Easter. The author resorted to supernatural life to illustrate the results of resistance to Christian teachings. Nychypor, as well as the reader, gets a glimpse of eternal punishment for leading a life of debauchery. Kvitka chooses the after-life to illustrate his point. One feels that the author enjoys writing about supernatural life, yet does not permit secondary details to obscure his goal. In Dead Men's Easter, the frightful sensation created by the rattling of skeletons, the mad scramble for a tiny particle of food stuck between Nychypor's teeth, and especially by the incident where Nychypor offers physical resistance to the skeletons, succeeds in realizing the author's objective. This incident emphasizes Kvitka's didacticism and moralization; these are a stimulus to the reader to re-examine his life and to reconsider his sense of values.

We find all vices of the time personified in the skeletons of Dead Men's Easter. There are flirts, drunkards, thieves, cheats, idlers and good-for-nothings. Even if their vices had been hidden from humans, they

were detected and punished by Almighty God. There were no righteous figures participating in the Dead Men's Easter.

The Witch of Konotop is a story where Kvitka deals with evil from beginning to end. A professional soldier, a Company Captain, earned his rank legitimately, but he preferred to enjoy his life rather than to carry out his duties conscientiously. The Adjutant, a covetous and envious individual, took advantage of the Captain's ignorance and easy-going nature. He wanted to impress their senior officers by his efficiency. The two cooperated in a search for witches in Konotop. A combination of laxity and envy resulted in a behavior unbecoming to responsible officers.

In other stories, Kvitka appears as a sober, moralizing teacher and a preacher. He idealizes his heroes and encourages them to lead an upright life, for which a reward is forthcoming.

As in the case of Gogol, Kvitka's stories are very realistic, as if taken from actual life. This impression of reality comes naturally and effortlessly. In the Soldier's Portrait the artist was introduced like this: "Now I remember. They called him Kuzma, Trokhymovych after his father."⁹ The artist painted another portrait for a landowner who thought highly of his gardening abilities. The portrait of a soldier would have made a good scare-crow. The Ukrainians are good gardeners, and the landowner was typical of all his countrymen in the Poltava district. The artist himself

9. H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1956), Vol. II, p. 6.

came from "Brusylivka - if you have heard of it - Kursk guberniya."¹⁰

Kvitka built a market setting around the soldier's portrait. Scenes from life are incorporated in the market - a gypsy with a bear, and a happy-go-lucky chumak. The market took place in Lypka, a real town. An aged bard with his kobza or bandura entertained the market-goers. All these details create an impression of reality in the works of Hryhoriy Kvitka; it seems as if Kvitka was describing reality rather than something that had evolved in his imagination.

Gogol's use of narrators leaves the impression that he is unable to introduce his characters as real, live beings. Throughout his works Gogol's characters are introduced unceremoniously, and his descriptions are scanty and vague. This applies particularly to young men and women who play the roles of lovers. For example, he did not describe Paraska's physical features in Sorochyntsi Market, but went into considerable length to describe the landscape or the setting in which we meet this young girl. Paraska's description is not given at the outset, and her portrait is no clearer at the conclusion of the story. She is introduced as a round-faced girl, with dark eyes and eyebrows, smiling lips, red and blue ribbons on her head, and long hair. The rest is left to the reader's imagination. In the Eve of St. John, Pidorka's description is still scantier. We meet Hanna in May Night by the light of the moon; her eyes sparkle, and her coral necklace glistens. There is much more description of the latch

10. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 6.

and the door through which the girl makes her entrance. All his female characters are introduced with equally scanty and haphazard descriptions.

His scanty descriptions do not indicate that Gogol was prejudiced against women. He is equally sketchy in his descriptions of the young men who were their suitors. Holopupenko appeared near the bridge in a white jacket and a gray cap, but his appearance and character are left to the reader's imagination. The author delved into the family ancestry of Peter in the Eve of St. John, and eventually informs the reader that he was an orphan who had suffered hardships, and possessed "one gray overcoat" with a countless number of holes in it. In May Night Levko, who came out to meet Hanna by the light of the moon, wore a cap and carried a bandura. An equally scanty introduction of his characters is found in all his early works even though personalities from his later works such as Chichikov, Sobakevich or Nozdrev in Dead Souls live graphically in the reader's mind.

The interplay of forces which creates an intangible unity of life in his portrayal of the social and national backgrounds of his work is paralleled in Gogol's portrayal of the relationship between nature, people, animals and objects . . . Nature becomes humanized: the oaks saunter aimlessly, woods, sky, and carts with their travellers, turn upside down and walk in the river without falling into the deep; trees sway their heads like drunken Cossacks; the woods become the hair that grows on the shaggy head of the wood demon, and the water flows through his beard; the sky and valleys seem to sleep with their eyes open; on Khlobuyev's estate the very buildings yawn. Animals too assume human traits . . . In relation to people the reverse takes place; the senses confound the detail with the whole or see the whole as other than it is. The crowd in 'Sorochintsy Fair' becomes a monster; Ivan Ivanovich is a long frockcoat and collar, in which his head sits like a pumpkin; the faces of Ivan Ivanovich and Ivan Nikiforovich resemble vegetables;

the passersby of Nevsky Prospekt are a procession of dress details; Chichikov's glimpse of Sobakevich's wife reminds him of a cucumber, and this makes him notice too, in kissing her hand, that she had washed her hands in pickling brine.¹¹

When one compares Kvitka's characters with those of Gogol, one must bear in mind that Kvitka's stories are considerably longer, and the length of the story may have influenced the description of the characters. However, one cannot excuse the lack of detail in Gogol's descriptions of characters. Marusya, for example, in Kvitka's story of this name, is described from her childhood upwards. The author describes the setting in which we find Marusya, her personal appearance and her character. The reader gradually discovers her outlook on life, her personal likes and dislikes, her approval and disapproval of certain actions and conduct.

In Marusya we meet Vasyl, Marusya's admirer. Vasyl too is described at length. The reader also learns of Vasyl's perseverance and his mental ability. Kvitka gives a fuller picture of his heroes and his villains.

In some stories Kvitka wastes little time in introducing his main characters. In Dead Men's Easter, he opens his story thus: "There once lived a man and his wife. The man was called Nychypor, his wife Priska."¹² Five lines further on he mentions a new character, Nychypor's father, and

11. Nina Brodiansky, "Gogol ' and His Characters," The Slavonic and East European Review, XXXI (1952-53), pp. 48-49.

12. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 101.

tells us that he is an outright drunkard. Another five lines on Kvitka quotes a popular Ukrainian proverb: "Little wonder that people say: an apple does not roll far away from the tree trunk. Nychpor inherited his father's traits."¹³ Thus, within thirteen lines of the introductory paragraph, the reader has a mental picture of Nychpor's character. His title and opening remarks are often sufficient to illustrate the hero's character.

In the Witch of Konotop, Kvitka uses an original way to introduce the story and the hero, the Captain. The story opens with the words: "Sad and unhappy . . ."¹⁴ These three words are enough to indicate that the narrative will not be light-hearted, and that the main character would be of a "sad and unhappy" type. All fourteen chapters open with these three words: "sad and unhappy . . ." sat the Captain Yavdokha Zubykha walked about . . . The tone of the opening words prevail throughout the story. It deals with "sad and unhappy" characters, it contains "sad and unhappy" incidents, and it leads to a "sad and unhappy" conclusion. The main character, the Captain, is "sad and unhappy" at the outset of the story, and he becomes even more "sad and unhappy" at the end.

The difference in the two authors' technique for introducing their characters was probably no accident. Whereas Kvitka describes his characters fully, Gogol either gives a brief description or none at all, as with Holopupenko, Hanna and Vakula. Kvitka's choice of words and tone

13. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 101.

14. Ibid., p. 152.

is consistent with the development of his characters, and it also induces the reader to adapt the same opinion of them as the author. His characters proved to be either ideal heroes or rogues. Unlike Gogol, whose "listeners" or readers are already supposed to know the characters in question, Kvitka introduced his own characters; his introductory remarks give a firm outline of his characters and mould them into the required shape.

The characters in Gogol's works are not real, live, human people such as we would normally meet in life. They are stiff, restrained and mechanical-like tin-soldiers in appearance and behavior. Whereas the story moves on swiftly, the characters remain static; they are presented in his works very formally, appearing automatically at the right place and time in the story. They are inclined to represent types rather than real people, lacking any human charm, vitality or mobility to the swiftly-moving tempo of the story. The actual narrative, however, and the way in which it is presented, does not suffer from this deficiency.

The reader encounters two extreme types of character in the works of Hryhoriy Kvitka. The first extreme consists of a degenerate type of people who have renounced their proper place in society, and who are willing to resort to any means to achieve their selfish objectives. They lack the will-power to snap out of their listlessness and degeneration. For them, life is not hopeless, yet the chasm between their present deplorable state and their imaginary life of leisure is too wide to cross. They lack the vitality and reasoning power to shake off the malignant symptoms of selfishness; they resort to witchcraft and supernatural media, but never succeed in

bridging the gap. They seem to persevere in their present unenviable condition without realizing that their own spiritual and physical efforts could bring them the desired happiness if they applied themselves consciously to the task.

At the other extreme are the ideal, semi-monastic and puritanical type of people in Kvitka's works. They carry out their duties efficiently; they are full of vitality, and their keen sense of human values inspires them to yet more self-improvement. Vasyl, for example, in Marusya, sees his serious handicaps, poverty and illiteracy, but instead of giving up hopelessly, he sets himself to master these defects, and succeeds.

Kvitka's ideal characters behave in an idealistic way; the low type becomes bogged down in despondency while awaiting for some miracle that will assure them of a life of ease. It is interesting to note that Kvitka never lets his rogues, villains, or drunkards repent or reform. Nychypor, the drunkard, sees the height of human happiness on Easter Sunday, and is treated with kindness, but he shows no sign of repentance or reform. Kvitka's low types thrive on misery and evil, and seek to improve their conditions by evil means. According to Kvitka, all human misfortunes are temporary; they are intended to test the human will. This is where the weak fall by the wayside and the valiant continue even under adverse conditions.

Although Gogol's earlier part of Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka is full of rather stiff and motionless characters, Taras Bulba has plenty of typically Gogolian figures who yet represent strong, virile national characters. Taras Bulba himself is representative of the great historical

figures among the Kozak Hetmans.

Taras Bulba is a national hero. He is a spokesman of the expectations and aspirations of the Ukrainian national masses, of their hatred against their subjugators, and their passionate desire to liberate their Fatherland.¹⁵

This characteristic does not only apply to Gogol's Taras Bulba. Other men under his command are also considered as representatives of the Ukrainians as a whole.

Gogol's greatness, as an artist of history, lies in the fact that, for him, the basic heroes of history were the people, their struggle, and the people's activities accentuated, in his opinion, the course of events. The death of Taras Bulba does not alter the general optimistic resonance of the story. The national hymn rings out to courage and fame, and does not abate. Not only Taras Bulba, but also his virile son, Ostap, and the Kozaks Kasiyan Bovdyuh, Musiy Shylo, Stepan Huska, Kokubenko are valiant, noble heroes who do not hesitate to sacrifice their life for the sake of liberating their Fatherland.¹⁶

In Taras Bulba Gogol's description of individuals did not deviate from his former methods, but he shed his vagueness when he represented their aspirations and their valor.

Gogol's titles and sub-titles are vague and often misleading. Sorochyntsi Market, The Eve of St. John, May Night, The Lost Document, and even Taras Bulba are typical examples; they could have dealt with any topic from strictly religious themes, moralization and idealization to pure

15. N. Y. Krutikova, Hohol' ta ukrayins'ka literatura (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1957), p. 31.

16. Ibid., p. 31.

fun and frolics, as in the case of The Eve of St. John. The author's sub-titles are more definite, yet such ones as "Hanna" or "The Boys Dance" could also cover a wide range of subject. The epigraphs in Sorochyntsi Market are more suggestive of the subject matter. Generally speaking, Gogol's titles are as unpredictable as the stories they represent, but they convey some allusion to the contents.

To those who know Kvitka's life history, the titles of his stories are much more suggestive than those of Gogol. Dead Men's Easter or The Witch of Konotop are good examples. The titles themselves suggest gruesome stories about supernatural life. Marusya can be compared to Gogol's vagueness, and The Soldier's Portrait is even more deceptive than any of Gogol's titles. It is difficult to guess that a market was the subject of this story. Although the titles do not suggest the subject matter in Kvitka's works, they do suggest the inspiration that lies behind Kvitka's moralization or didacticism.

One must remember that Gogol was first and foremost an artist. In true artist's fashion Gogol depicted people and incidents as they appeared in actual life. He believed in art for art's sake. Colorful and romantic Poltava left a permanent imprint in his mind and he passed it on to us in his works.

Gogol's love for music and folk songs are reflected in the latter part of his Ukrainian works, especially in Terrible Vengeance. His description of "the wonderful Dnipro" in fine weather in Terrible Vengeance is irrelevant to the story, yet it is a fine piece of musical prose. It is a

fine representation of the poetic soul of the Ukrainian people. In the river Dnipro one can see the tender, lyrical spirit of the Ukrainian people, their broad culture, as broad as the river Dnipro - mighty and warlike, yet placid, gentle and beautiful. A comparison of the good old days with his own time provoked Gogol to make this nostalgic reflection:

O, time! Time! Time that has passed! What has become of you, my years! Go, my little one, into the cellar and bring me a dipper of med. I will drink to the former fate and olden time.¹⁷

A very important feature of Gogol's work is the use of folklore. Beside providing many themes from the past, folk material inspired Gogol to imitate folk tales and popular, lyrical and historical songs.

The influence of folk songs and historical dumy is noticeable in particular in the story Terrible Vengeance. Folk poetry accentuated the melodious rhythm of the narrative. Typical repetitions are connected with the dumy.¹⁸

A feature of the Kozak dumy appears in the Terrible Vengeance when Danylo follows the suspected sorcerer to his den:

Danylo seemed to see the moon glistening in the room, the stars moving about, the dark blue sky shimmering indistinctly . . . Danylo seemed to see (here he began to tug his whiskers to make sure he was not asleep) that the sky was no longer in the room . . .¹⁹

(The spirit of the Kozak dumy is lost in translation).

17. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 72.

18. Krutikova, Hohol' ta ukrayins'ka literatura, p. 35.

19. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 68.

Gogol's musical pendulum swung far beyond the Kozak dumy and the Kozak period. In his swing toward antiquity, Gogol tried to imitate the lament of Princess Yaroslavna over the death of her husband, Prince Ihor. Gogol imitated the lament found in a poem, the oldest known Ukrainian secular poem, dated about 1187. Here is an example of how Gogol tried to imitate this ancient tradition:

Kateryna threw up her arms and fell on the body like a sheaf. "O, my husband, are you lying with your eyes closed? Arise my dear beloved, stretch out your hand! Raise yourself a little! Look just once at Kateryna, move your lips, utter just one word."²⁰

In his efforts to incorporate as much Ukrainian folklore as possible, Gogol included some pre-Christian customs. There was an ancient custom that the wife of a nobleman saw no future after the death of her husband, and Gogol tried to incorporate this into Terrible Vengeance.

"Danylo!" Kateryna shrieked in despair, snatching him by the hand and throwing herself at his feet. "I pray not for myself. There is only one way for me: The wife who lives after the death of her husband is unworthy. The Dnipro, the cold Dnipro, will be my grave. But look at your son, Danylo, look at your son ..."²¹

Kateryna pleads with her husband to abandon his duel with her father, a suspected sorcerer. Although Danylo was an expert marksman, in previous contests with his father-in-law he had come second. While she was imploring him, he reached for a Turkish pistol in which he had absolute confidence.

20. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 73.

21. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

In Hryhoriy Kvitka we find a different calibre of man, a different temperament and outlook on life. Kvitka had an experience of God in early childhood, and this influenced his whole conception of man's object in life. He realized that the Ukrainians possessed a boundless cultural wealth, but their archaic language in literature was cramping their ability to express themselves. Kvitka turned to the vernacular, and searched for ideal characters to match the cultural wealth of the nation. His idealized personalities required their own contemporary language to express themselves. Only the vernacular could express the spirit of a genuine hero, his bold and courageous temperament.

So Kvitka looked for his national heroes among the people who surrounded him all his life. The author did not permit his heroes to be colorless or spineless dandies, as the story of Marusya shows; he conceived his breadwinners as strong, resolute and manly, sound in body and mind. The virtue of his heroes was not exaggerated - it was taken from real life.

Kvitka gave his heroes in his stories their natural speech. This language made his heroes real, manly, colorful and immortal.²² Kvitka's heroes had to be strong characters to withstand the ridicule of those who abhorred the use of Ukrainian in prose. They had to be noble and serious, but not to the point of exaggeration. The author avoided superlatives in

22. Chaly, H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko: tvorchist', pp. 108-109.

describing his heroes.

Kvitka selected an ideal family, an ideal home which strictly observed the traditions; he examined and evaluated their immediate past as a guide to their future conduct. He does this very innocently, yet very forcefully. The title, which is also the concluding remark: Ot tobi i skarb serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it reveals the joy and happiness on Easter morning of those who respect and live by the teachings of our Savior. Secondly, it shows the emptiness and aimlessness of the life led by Khoma. Kvitka, as a meticulous folklorist, combines folk materials with the plot of the story; at no point does folklore overshadow or outweigh the author's dramatic objective.

The poetic qualities in Kvitka assume a broader and deeper scope than in Gogol. The latter exercised his poetic qualities in prose; this is displayed in his description of the Dnipro river. In Kvitka poetry is represented in the simple, gentle, gracious Marusya, as well as in Naum, Vasyl and Nastya in the story entitled Marusya.²³

There is yet another striking similarity in the authors. Both Gogol and Kvitka, as if to give the reader time to regain his breath after following their swift tempo, made lyrical digressions at the most unexpected instances.

23. V. G. Belinsky, cited in Chaly, H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko: tvorchist', p. 158.

Gogol keeps the reader in suspense in the Eve of St. John with his supernatural forces, the fearsome search for fern's blossom and the devil's attempt to interfere with the daring searcher. Then, all of a sudden, as if to give the reader time to regain his breath or to let him have a moment of relaxation, Gogol turns to a description of the ancient wedding customs which were much more elaborate than in his time. The author uses the same device in May Night. After a series of terrifying incidents we suddenly read: "Majestically and gloomily appeared the dark maple forest . . ." ²⁴ This brief pause enabled the reader to compose himself after the strain. Similar digressions are found in the Terrible Vengeance and Sorochyntsi Market with its description of the countryside in the summer and the gently-flowing Pslo river.

Hryhoriy Kvitka used a similar technique. Marusya had fallen so much in love with Vasyl that she was afraid of herself, afraid that Vasyl would not welcome her sincere love. She was afraid because Vasyl meant everything to her, and yet at the time, it was an unconfessed love. "Marusya . . . thought only of him . . . she cried and worried the whole night." ²⁵ Rather than dwell at length on Marusya's agony over love matters, Kvitka suddenly turned to the glorious Ukrainian summer morning. He described the gentle murmur of a tiny waterfall and the birds awakening to greet the

24. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 32.

25. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 40.

rising sun and the beautiful day.²⁶

Gogol's conclusions are as unpredictable as his titles and introductory remarks. He either makes abrupt conclusions or promises them in later volume which never appears. One typical form of conclusion in his works is a sudden change of thought at the end of the story, or a surprise ending. In the Terrible Vengeance, for example, no one would suspect that the whole story was a long ballad sung by an aged bard. Only Gogol could conclude his story in this way without leaving the readers frustrated. The author's constant device of changing his mood or viewpoint, makes his conclusions all the more interesting. Readers expect happy endings; they expect their heroes and heroines to overcome all their difficulties, and they expect punishment for those who foment misunderstanding and evil. Gogol ignored the silent demands of his reader; he concluded his stories in his own way.

Kvitka's conclusions to his stories are very different. With the exception of Marusya, they are conventional. Marusya begins with a description of a wedding, and ends with the forthcoming marriage of Vasyl and Marusya. Kvitka avoids the repetition by improvising a tragedy which enables him to describe a funeral. He seems conscious, however, that he was leaving the reader with an unhappy ending, and so went a step further. The hero entered a monastery, received tonsure, and died. It seems as if he could not help leaving the reader with a note of sadness. Kvitka

26. Chaly, H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko: tvorchist', pp. 155-156.

managed to overcome this difficulty by expounding the Christian doctrine which exceeded the bounds of earthly happiness; he pointed to the glory of abiding with God and the eternal happiness which was the reward of a righteous life. This is as unexpected as some of Gogol's endings, but it seems an unnecessarily prolonged conclusion.

In the majority of Kvitka's stories, the opening paragraph or paragraphs suggest the theme, the moral to be drawn and even the conclusion. Kvitka carefully brought his stories to a "logical" or expected conclusion by summing up his moral teachings. In The Witch of Konotop, the author added a "Conclusion" in which he reiterated his views on witchcraft. He underlined every evil mentioned in the story, and emphasized the justice of the punishment. In one instance Kvitka's conclusion reminds us of Gogol's method of introducing his work. "Mr. Symeyon [sic], the dyak from Dzhyhun, told me this story."²⁷ Rather than use the dyak as the narrator, Kvitka concluded by admitting that the story was the dyak's version and that he only wrote it down.

Both authors selected similar topics, placed them in a setting of Ukrainian folklore from some definite locality and modelled the behavior of their characters on examples from daily life. To this extent their works are similar. However, they wrote their works for different types of readers and so they treated the subject matter to suit their individual needs, and concluded their works in their own way.

27. Kvitka, Tvory, p. 252.

The difference between the works of Gogol and Kvitka can be seen in the authors themselves. One can notice from reading their lives that they differed in personality, temperament, occupation, experience and general outlook. The structure in both authors serves as an effective means of conveying a message to the readers.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The significance of the theme of this work lies in the fact that Gogol and Kvitka are important milestones in two separate fields of literature; Gogol heralded a great period of Russian prose, while Kvitka instituted and headed a rising period in Ukrainian prose. The great era of Russian poetry had ended suddenly with Pushkin's fatal duel; no one was able to equal or prolong the level of the great master's work.

"For Russia, Gogol was important as Pushkin's successor and as an associate of Belinsky as an artist, blazing the trail along which Turgenev, Nekrasov, Hertzen, Ostrovsky, Saltykov-Shchedrin and many others followed who considered Gogol equal to Pushkin, their teacher.¹

Gogol's Evening on a Farm near Dikanka appeared in print three years prior to Pushkin's death. It came at a time when the public's interest was shifting from poetry to prose. Gogol therefore introduced a realistic style which was continued by subsequent writers.

Hryhoriy Kvitka followed Kotlyarevsky's sudden departure from the conventional Church Slavic in Ukrainian literature; he was the first to use the vernacular in Ukrainian prose.

Both authors were born in the same general Poltava region, brought up in similar cultural and domestic environments, and received a relatively

1. V. Zhdanov, N. V. Gogol: ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoy literatury, 1959), p. 4.

thorough educational training for their time. Through living in a setting of natural beauty amid numerous Ukrainian historical monuments they were inspired to reproduce this beauty in their works. The wealth of folklore which the authors had absorbed in their early years contributed later to their works.

Because they became acquainted with the popular life and traditions of the Ukraine at an early age, they were able to convey their beauty in many ways, for example, in the market scenes. Their market scenes do not consist merely of commercial transactions; they are a mine of social information and history. Behind the carefree chumak lie centuries of effort to satisfy the essential domestic requirements of the population. The chumak is a symbol of centuries of the rise of commercialism, and of an equal period of chumak life and development. The feeble, aged bard with an ancient kobza-bandura instrument in his hand was perhaps taken for granted. Yet in the olden times such bards accompanied the Kozak forces wherever they went and their nimble fingers consoled, comforted and delighted the Kozak Hetmans and their valiant armies.

Both authors used the folklore materials that had originated in the early dawn of prehistoric Ukraine and undergone constant refinement as civilization improved. Gogol and Kvitka built their works on the solid foundation of this cultural wealth.

Gogol's inherent feeling for natural beauty is a significant factor in his works. Natural beauty, God's beauty, is simple, yet so exceedingly complex, and the author tries to reproduce this simplicity and complexity

in his stories. The description of the River Dnipro is a good example. This quality has been accepted by readers who are indifferent to natural beauty for they can always appreciate the stories as stories. However, if one appreciates simple and complex beauty in literature, one has added reason to enjoy Gogol. Gogol speaks of the importance of simplicity in literature as follows:

For this reason the simpler the subject, the greater the poet must be to obtain the unusual out of it, so that the unusual may become, among other things, a complete truth.²

Hryhoriy Kvitka had a very different interpretation of beauty and life springing from a different sense of values. Instead of portraying natural beauty to embellish the effects of his works, Kvitka translated God's beauty in terms of man. In Kvitka's works man is God's beauty, and He is revealed to the reader through his characters, their behavior, their attitude and outlook on life, their conversations, the advice which they give to others, and their long-range plans. Here is a sample of the author's interpretation of God's beauty, taken from Do Good, Good will Come out of it.

Only there is His will: Love Him as your own Creator from whom you receive everything, light, livelihood, stock, family and all, all, and there are no bounds to His kindness and charity; and love mankind as your own sincere brother,³ for He, our Lord, willed that He be called Father in a prayer which you read daily: "Our Father who are in Heaven."⁴ So we are all as dear to Him, as

2. N. V. Gogol, Tvory, translated collectively (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oyi literatury, 1952), p. 381.

3. Cf. Mat. XXII:36-40.

4. Cf. Mat. VI:9-13.

children to their own father;⁵ and, in consequence, we must love one another as brothers, offer help in distress, divert misfortunes from one another, and, in case of need, suffer for one another, and suffer misfortune. Only then will we please God and will we enter His Kingdom. Is it not only for this reason that He sends misery upon us so that we can learn to do good in deed?⁶ I dare say we are all courageous in words, we always do good. "I am so and so" someone says, "I am so, I am good, I help the aged, I assist the poor . . ." Just come to him in misery, let the hungry ask him for a piece of dry bread, let the poverty-stricken ask for clothes - O, my! He will not offer you a piece of dry bread, he will lead you out of the house by the hand, lucky if you do not get a whack over the occiput.⁷ Therefore misery teaches us to recognize people, and to accept good from the good.⁸

Through misery we learn what people are like who possesses God's genuine beauty, and we respect them according to their deeds.⁹

Therefore, according to Kvitka, man is part of God's beauty on earth, and every man is a part of God's incomprehensible plan. Every act and word of man must conform to law-abiding society and thus reflect the Maker's will. The author's lengthy interpretation of beauty is based on God's Supreme Commandment which, in short, reads: Love thou thy God; love thou thy neighbor (fellow man). Kvitka wished to see this kind of beauty, beauty in man's character.

Gogol painted reality as he visualized it; Kvitka idealized his settings for his characters. Gogol's reality posed no problems which he wished to

5. Cf. Mat. X:37-40.

6. Cf. Book of Job.

7. Cf. Mat. XXV:31-46.

8. Cf. Mat. VI:I-4.

9. Hryhoriy Kvitka, Tvory (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn'oy literatury, 1956), pp.121-122.

solve by means of contrasts; his portraits were, presumably, taken from life. Kvitka constantly confronted his reader with comparisons to illustrate his point. Gogol was not concerned with man's objective in life, it was up to everyone to find his own; he dealt with reality whether people understood their ultimate aims or not. Kvitka stresses that the guide to man's behavior is God's teachings and, in addition, that man is gifted with a mind and a reasoning power. These, according to Kvitka, ought to enable man to differentiate between good and evil, between God-sanctioned and selfishly-human desires. Naum Drot, Marusya, Vasyl and Priska, the wife of the infamous drunkard Nychypor, are examples.

Rich or poor, literate or illiterate, all were endowed with the capacity to reason. Naum Drot's refusal to permit Vasyl to marry Marusya may have seemed cruel at the time, but Drot's ability to think, reason and foresee, overruled sentimentality. As if guided by Almighty God Himself, Drot's decision inspired Vasyl to reconsider his own worth and admit his deficiencies, and to prove his worth in the eyes of Drot, society and the Supreme Being. The author's fatalistic conception served a useful purpose in this instance. Kvitka analyzes life deeply, in contrast to Gogol who reproduces life and its problems as they appear in his imagination.

Kvitka's villains remain villains. They defy God's beauty and prefer to remain social outcasts and degenerates, while dreaming of a leisurely future in luxury gained with the aid of the evil spirit - the devil. Gogol does not point his finger at villains, and so they are not brought out as prominently in his works. He lets his weaker characters wrestle with

their problems with their own strength.

Humble and poverty-stricken individuals are also found in Gogol's works. One of them is Peter, but the author did not single him out for criticism even though he might have been the victim of excessive drinking. Nor can the reader detect any external forces trying to influence Peter to resort to supernatural life. Peter's crucial moment in life came just before the mid-summer frolic. The author does not express his personal views, nor does he question the merit or fallacy of the old beliefs.

Kvitka presents his readers with idealized characters and an ideal setting, and he draws a definite conclusion for the reader's benefit. His heroes are a study in virtue and self-improvement. Gogol, however, treats his characters in many respects like a capable present-day theatrical producer. The plans are prepared, the stage set, and the author summons his characters to perform. Vakula, Levko, Holopupenko, Hanna, Pidorka, and Paraska and the rest of them play unrehearsed, and in their natural environment. The characters are not distorted to produce a particular effect nor are they classified into good, bad or indifferent categories.

The sources of both authors came mainly from folklore, primarily Ukrainian folk songs from various periods of Ukrainian history.

Until Kvitka the new Ukrainian literature had no artistic prose. Therefore, the only popular source, one that was necessary for its development was the prose of Ukrainian folklore.

Over the many centuries of its existence, the oral traditions accumulated enormous social and poetic experiences of the working people. For this reason all artists who had an ardent desire to serve their people, naturally turned to folklore sources: to the song in which people told of their sorrow and joys in highly poetic

forms; to folk proverbs, sayings, fables, oral traditions and anecdotes, from which writers adopted the folk philosophy, and the highly poetic and artistic sources.

Kvitka-Osnovyanenko, as is known, treated folklore with the utmost consideration.¹⁰

Like Kvitka, Gogol also found the required materials for his stories amid the cultural treasury of Ukrainian folklore.

Having placed Ukrainian portraits in the midst of his stories, the author desired to reveal as fully as possible and as truthfully as possible their psychology, their hopes and expectations. With this objective Gogol turned to the wealth of oral folk poetry, Ukrainian songs, fable and cheerful anecdotes. The writer's creative attitude toward these materials is explained by his proximity to the ideal direction of folk creativity.¹¹

The folklore furnished the necessary ideas and purposes for which the works were intended. Regardless of the period, folk materials, and especially the folk songs, reflect with exactitude the feelings of individuals and communities of the time. These songs express unpretentious, unadorned, unrehearsed feelings. Songs reflect inner feelings that come from the heart. Most songs are feelings in words - bare truth. These folk materials gave Gogol and Kvitka an insight into reality and the state of affairs of the time, and they reproduced the spirit of folk songs in their prose, each in his own way. Gogol's own appreciation of folklore confirms this.

10. Dmytro Chaly, H. F. Kvitka-Osnovyanenko: tvorchist' (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn' oyi literatury, 1962), p. 114.

11. N. Y. Krutikova, Hohol' ta ukrayins'ka literatura (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhn' oyi literatury, 1957), p. 31.

But only the Ukrainian Steppes heard the best songs and voices: only there, under the protection of the low earthen homes, crowned by mulberry and cherry trees, in the morning, noon, and evening splendor, in the lemon-colored yellowness of the falling heads of wheat they echo, and only Steppe lapwing, flights of larks and orioles disturb them with their warbling.

I do not speak precisely about the importance of folk songs. It is a folk history, lively, dazzling, filled with colors, truth; a history which uncovers the whole life of people. If its life was active, variegated, playful, filled with everything poetic, and they did not attain a higher civilization with the aid of its manysidedness, then the whole zeal, everything that is mighty, the youthful existence is poured out in the folk songs. They are monuments of the past, more than a monument a stone with an eloquent posture, with a historic inscription - a living chronicle is nothing against it which speaks, sings of the past. In this respect songs are everything to Malorossiia [the Ukraine]: poetry, history and a paternal tomb. He who does not delve deep into them, will not discover anything of the past way of life of this florid part of Russia. A historian ought not to search for an indication of time and date of a battle or an exact description of place, a true report; not many songs will help him in this respect. But if he wishes to acquaint himself with the true way of life, natural character, all the subtlest shades of feelings, emotions, sufferings, happiness of the people described; if he wishes to trace the spirit of the past period, the general character of the whole and every particle separately, then he will be satisfied completely; the history of the nation unfurls before him in resplendent grandeur.¹²

This is Gogol's own eulogy to Ukrainian folk songs.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages was presented as an occurrence in daily life in Gogol's works. The author did not exaggerate or minimize the amounts consumed; he did not stop to diagnose the causes, nor did he philosophize on its use or abuse. Total abstention, social drinking or habitual drunkenness were mere facts of life to the author, and he recorded them to suit his purpose. The author was not concerned

12. Gogol, *Tvory*, translated collectively, pp. 393-394.

with the social aspect or the ill-effects arising out of drinking.

Kvitka maintained a puritanic outlook on the consumption of liquor. Evidently he tolerated social drinking at home with family and friends where restraint and good manners are observed. The author had no patience with those who frequented public houses, and still less with drunkards. He fully sympathized with those who were needlessly penalized by habitual drunkards - wives and innocent children. Kvitka looked far beyond the immediate act of drinking. In the Khomas and Nychypors, Kvitka saw the ruined home, the suffering of an upright wife, the hopelessness in the eyes of their children, and society shamed by a callous individual. The author felt their grief and woes, for, as well as the irresponsible husbands, he saw hungry, homeless, tattered and hopeless children exploited by selfish individuals. The author saw needless hardship and suffering, and an uncertain future. He was didactic about drink in order to discourage his readers from risking such domestic catastrophes. Kvitka viewed alcoholism with disgust while Gogol treated the subject as if he were a disinterested spectator.

There is yet another striking characteristic typical of Gogol in his early works. The majority of his characters, especially in Taras Bulba, are young people, active and vigorous. His swains, young ladies, and battalions of Kozaks are young people. They want to do something useful, to create, to carve for themselves a name worth handing on to posterity, a kind of Kozak Bayda tradition.

O, do not waste so many phrases, so many words - simply say: Here is Ivan Ivanovich Pererepenko, or: here is Ivan Nikiforovich Dovhochkhun! And believe me, they will understand you much quicker.¹³

Andriy's betrayal by joining the forces against which his own father, Taras Bulba, is leading his Kozaks, deserves special attention.

"Now, what are you going to do?" said Taras, looking him straight in the eyes. But Andriy had nothing to say to that and stood with eyes fixed on the ground.

"Well, my son! Did your lyakhs help you?"

Andriy stood still without answering.

"So [you wanted] to betray? To betray your faith? To betray your own kind? Halt, get off your horse!"

He got off the horse as meekly as a child and stood before Taras neither dead nor alive.

"Halt and do not move! I begot you, I will kill you!" said Taras and, stepping a pace backward, took the musket off his shoulder. Andriy was white as a sheet; one could see that his lips moved slightly to utter someone's name; but it was not the name of his Fatherland, nor his mother's, nor his brother's - it was name of a most beautiful Polish girl. Taras fired.

Like a head of grain mowed down by a sickle . . . his head drooped, and he fell on the grass without uttering a single word.¹⁴

This scene takes place during a brief lull on the battlefield. Two opposing military forces are facing one another, two sets of faithful sons stand ready to sacrifice everything, even their own lives for the Fatherland, and here, suddenly, father and son, Taras Bulba and Andriy, face one

13. G. V. Belinsky, cited in V. Zhdanov, N. V. Gogol: ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoy literatury, 1959), p. 28.

14. Gogol, Sochineniya, p. 48.

another - not as father and son, but as deadly enemies representing two separate causes and ideologies.

At the most crucial moment in his life, Peter, in the Eve of St. John, was swept by the spirit of mid-summer merriment into the torrent of traditional celebrations. At the height of Andriy's achievement - his graduation from the Kiev Academy and attainment of manhood - his heart was burning with anxiety for the girl he loved, and eagerness for his Fatherland. Gogol portrays conflicting feelings in the youth: a love of quiet domestic life, and a desire to fulfil high ideals and preserve his nation's freedom. It took his father's severity to sober Andriy's judgment. His speechlessness was a confession of guilt. Like a brave Kozak, he was fully prepared to face the consequences calmly, even though he was fully armed.

This is the height of Gogol's dramatic realism. Apart from Ostap's subtle suggestion that Andriy should be buried on Ukrainian soil, there was no expression of sentimentality. Bulba was summoned to command the campaign as if nothing happened. Unlike Kvitka, Gogol did not stop to moralize on Andriy's battle with himself; he did not emphasize his divided feelings of love and duty.

The majority of Kvitka's characters were middle-aged people who lent themselves to the author's idealization, and they were far removed from the type of Andriy with his self-willed action. Kvitka demanded reasoning power from his characters, and they were sufficiently mature to meet the author's expectations.

The beauty of the works of Gogol and Kvitka lies in the fact that their background and source materials are so strikingly similar, some aspects of their works showed a great similarity, and yet the general outline of some of their stories reveals prominent divergencies. It would have been a miracle if the two authors, working independently, had shown complete similarity.

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